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EDWARD WORTLEY MONTAGU

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THE
LETTERS AND WORKS

OF

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

EDITED BY HER GREAT-GRANDSON

LORD WHARNCLIFFE.

THIRD EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS DERIVED FROM THE
ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS, ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES,

AND A NEW MEMOIR

BY W. MOY THOMAS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

MDCCCLXI.



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THE LETTERS AND WORKS

OF

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE.¹

TO LADY ——. ²

HAVING (like other undeserving people) a vast opinion of my own merits, and some small faith in your sincerity, I believed it impossible you should forget me, and therefore very impudently expected a long letter from you this morning; but Heaven, which you know delights in abasing the proud, has, I find, decreed no such thing; and, notwithstanding my vanity and your vows, I begin to fancy myself forgotten; and this epistle comes, in humble manner, to kiss your hands, and petition for the scanty alms of one little visit, though never so short: pray, madam, for God's sake, have pity on a poor prisoner—one little visit—so may God send you a fine husband, continuance of beauty, &c.; but if you deny my request, and make a jest of my tenderness (which, between friends, I do think a little upon the ridiculous), I do vow never to —; but I had better not vow, for I shall certainly love you, do

¹ The letters in this section, except where otherwise stated in notes, are printed from the originals among the Wortley papers.—T.

² I have not found the original of this letter. There is nothing to show to whom it was addressed —T.

what you will—though I beg you would not tell some certain people of that fond expression, who will infallibly advise you to follow the abominable maxims of, no answer, ill-treatment, and so forth, not considering that such conduct is full as base as beating a poor wretch who has his hands tied; and mercy to the distressed is a mark of divine goodness. Upon which Godly consideration I hope you will afford a small visit to your disconsolate.

TO THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY.
[WITH HER TRANSLATION OF EPICTETUS.]

July 20, 1710.¹

MY LORD,—Your hours are so well employed, I hardly dare offer you this trifle to look over; but then, so well am I acquainted with that sweetness of temper which accompanies your learning, I dare ever assure myself of a pardon. You have already forgiven me greater impertinences, and condescended yet further in giving me instructions, and bestowing some of your minutes in teaching me. This surprising humility has all the effect it ought to have on my heart; I am sensible of the gratitude I owe to so much goodness, and how much I am ever bound to be your servant. Here is the work of one week of my solitude—by the many faults in it your lordship will easily believe I spent no more time upon it; it was hardly finished when I was obliged to begin my journey, and I had not leisure to write it over again. You have it here without any corrections, with all its blots and errors; I endeavoured at no beauty of style, but to keep as literally as I could to the sense of the author. My only intention, in presenting it, is to ask your lordship whether I have understood Epictetus? The fourth chapter, particularly, I am afraid I have mistaken. Piety and greatness of soul set you above all misfortunes that can happen to yourself, and the calumnies of false tongues; but that same piety which renders what happens to yourself indifferent to you, yet softens

¹ So in Dallaway's edition; but there is no date to the manuscript in this place. A last leaf, however, is missing, and it is possible that Mr. Dallaway found this date at the foot of the letter.—T.

the natural compassion in your temper to the greatest degree of tenderness for the interests of the Church, and the liberty and welfare of your country: the steps that are now made towards the destruction of both, the apparent danger we are in, the manifest growth of injustice, oppression, and hypocrisy, cannot do otherwise than give your lordship those hours of sorrow, which, did not your fortitude of soul, and reflections from religion and philosophy, shorten, would add to the national misfortunes, by injuring the health of so great a supporter of our sinking liberties. I ought to ask pardon for this digression: it is more proper for me in this place to say something to excuse an address that looks so very presuming. My sex is usually forbid studies of this nature, and folly reckoned so much our proper sphere, we are sooner pardoned any excesses of that, than the least pretensions to reading or good sense. We are permitted no books but such as tend to the weakening and effeminating of the mind. Our natural defects are every way indulged, and it is looked upon as in a degree criminal to improve our reason, or fancy we have any. We are taught to place all our art in adorning our outward forms, and permitted, without reproach, to carry that custom even to extravagancy, while our minds are entirely neglected, and, by disuse of reflections, filled with nothing but the trifling objects our eyes are daily entertained with. This custom, so long established and industriously upheld, makes it even ridiculous to go out of the common road, and forces one to find as many excuses as if it was a thing altogether criminal not to play the fool in concert with other women of quality, whose birth and leisure only serve to render them the most useless and most worthless part of the creation. There is hardly a character in the world more despicable, or more liable to universal ridicule, than that of a learned woman: those words imply, according to the received sense, a tattling, impertinent, vain, and conceited creature. I believe nobody will deny that learning may have this effect, but it must be a very superficial degree of it. Erasmus was certainly a man of great learning and good sense, and he seems to have my opinion of it when

he says, *Fœmina qui* [sic] *vere sapit, non videtur sibi sapere; contra, quæ cum nihil sapiat sibi videtur sapere, ea demum bis stulta est.* The Abbé Bellegarde gives a right reason for women's talking over-much: they know nothing, and every outward object strikes their imagination, and produces a multitude of thoughts, which, if they knew more, they would know not worth their thinking of. I am not now arguing for an equality of the two sexes. I do not doubt God and nature have thrown us into an inferior rank; we are a lower part of the creation, we owe obedience and submission to the superior sex, and any woman who suffers her vanity and folly to deny this, rebels against the law of the Creator, and indisputable order of nature: but there is a worse effect than this, which follows the careless education given to women of quality, its being so easy for any man of sense, that finds it either his interest or his pleasure, to corrupt them. The common method is, to begin by attacking their religion: they bring them a thousand fallacious arguments their excessive ignorance hinders them from refuting: and I speak now from my own knowledge and conversation among them, there are more atheists among the fine ladies than the loosest sort of rakes; and the same ignorance that generally works out into excess of superstition, exposes them to the snares of any who have a fancy to carry them to t'other extreme. I have made my excuses already too long, and will conclude in the words of Erasmus:—*Vulgus sentit quod lingua Latina non convenit fœminis, quia parum facit ad tuendam illarum pudicitiam, quoniam rarum et insolitum est fœminam scire Latinam; attamen consuetudo omnium malarum rerum magistra. Decorum est fœminam in Germania nata* [sic] *discere Gallice, ut loquatur cum his qui sciunt Gallice; cur igitur habetur indecorum discere Latine, ut quotidie confabuletur cum tot autoribus tam facundis, tam eruditis, tam sapientibus, tam fides consultoribus? Certe mihi quantulumcunque cerebri est, malim in bonis studiis consumere, quam in precibus sine mente dictis, in pernoctibus conviviis, in exhaustiendis capacibus pateris, &c.*¹

¹ All that follows this word is now missing in the manuscript.—T.

I have tired your lordship, and too long delayed to subscribe myself

Your lordship's most respectful and obliged.

TO MRS. ANNE JUSTICE.¹

[Postmark, "Aug. 7."]

I AM very glad you direct yourself so well. I endeavour to make my solitude as agreeable as I can. Most things of that kind are in the power of the mind; we may make ourselves easy if we cannot perfectly happy. The news you tell me very much surprises me. I wish Mrs. B.² extremely well, and hope she designs better for herself than a stolen wedding with a man who (you know) we have reason to believe not the most sincere lover upon earth; and since his estate [is] in such very bad order, I am clearly of your opinion his best course would be the army, for I suppose six or seven thousand pound (if he should get that with his mistress) would not set him up again, and there he might possibly establish his fortune, at least better it, and, at worst, be rid of all his cares. I wonder all the young men in England don't take that method, certainly the most profitable as well [as] the noblest. I confess I cannot believe Mrs. B. so imprudent to keep on any private correspondence with him. I much doubt her perfect happiness if she runs away with him; I fear she will have more reason than ever to say there is no such thing. I have just now received the numbers of the great lottery which is drawing; I find myself (as yet) among the unlucky, but, thank God, the great prize is not come out, and there is room for hopes still. Prithee, dear child, pray heartily for me if I win. I don't question (in spite of all our disputes) to find myself perfectly happy, my heart goes very much pit-a-pat about it, but I've a horrid ill-boding mind that tells me I shan't win a farthing; I should be very glad to be mistaken in that case. I

¹ From the original, lately in the possession of Mr. Boone, of Bond-street. There is little in the contents to fix the date, and the letter is without signature. It is addressed "To Mrs. Anne Justice, at Mr. Justice's, on the Pavement at York, Yorkshire, by way of London."—T.

² Perhaps Miss Banks, an early Nottinghamshire friend.—T.

hear Mrs. B. has been at the Spa; I wonder you don't mention it. Adieu, my dear; pray make no more excuses about long letters, and believe yours never seem so to me.

FROM ———.¹

I MIGHT be dead, or you in Yorkshire, for anything that I am the better for your being in town; I have been sick ever since I saw you last, and now have a swelled face, and very bad; nothing will do me so much good as the sight of dear Lady Mary; when you come this way let me see you, for indeed I love you.

TO LADY ———.²

Jan. 13, 1715-16.

I FIND after all by your letter of yesterday, that Mrs. D—— is resolved to marry the old greasy curate. She was always High Church in an excessive degree, and you know she used to speak of Sacheverel as an apostolic saint, who was worthy to sit in the same place with St. Paul, if not a step above him. It is a matter, however, very doubtful to me, whether it is not still more the man than the apostle that Mrs. D—— looks to in the present alliance. Though at the age of forty, she is, I assure you, very far from being cold and insensible; her fire may be covered with ashes, but it is not extinguished. Don't be deceived, my dear, by that prudish and sanctified air. Warm devotion is [*sic*] no equivocal mark of warm passions; besides, I know it is a fact, of which I have proofs in hand, which I will tell you by word of mouth, that our learned and holy prude is exceedingly disposed to use the means supposed in the primitive command, let what will come of the end. The curate, indeed, is very filthy. Such a red,

¹ This note was published by Mr. Dallaway as from Pope; but it bears no signature, and the handwriting has little resemblance to that of Pope. It is addressed "To the Right Hon^{ble} the Lady Mary Wortley, in Charles-street, Westminster."—T.

² This letter was first published in the Additional Volume of 1767. Its authenticity is extremely doubtful. It is useless to endeavour to ascertain who were the persons referred to in initials, or to imagine a reason for suppressing their names after fifty years, if the publisher had really possessed the original.—T.

spongy, warty nose! Such a squint! In short, he is ugly beyond expression; and what ought naturally to render him peculiarly displeasing to one of Mrs. D——'s constitution and propensities, he is stricken in years. Nor do I really know how they will live. He has but forty-five pounds a year—she but a trifling sum; so that they are likely to feast upon love and ecclesiastical history, which will be very empty food without a proper mixture of beef and pudding. I have, however, engaged our friend, who is the curate's landlord, to give them a good lease; and if Mrs. D——, instead of spending whole days in reading Collier, Hickes, and vile translations of Plato and Epictetus, will but form the resolution of taking care of her house and minding the dairy, things may go tolerably. It is not likely that their tender loves will give them many sweet babes to provide for.

I met the lover yesterday, going to the alehouse in his dirty nightgown, with a book under his arm to entertain the club; and as Mrs. D—— was with me at the time, I pointed out to her the charming creature: she blushed and looked prim; but quoted a passage out of Herodotus, in which it is said that the Persians wore long nightgowns. There is really no more accounting for the taste in marriage of many of our sex, than there is for the appetite of your neighbour Miss S—y, who makes such waste of chalk and charcoal when they fall in her way.

As marriage produces children, so children produce care and disputes; and wrangling, as is said (at least by old bachelors and old maids), is one of the sweets of the conjugal state. You tell me that our friend Mrs. —— is at length blessed with a son; and that her husband, who is a great philosopher (if his own testimony is to be depended upon), insists on her suckling it herself. You ask my advice on this matter; and to give it you frankly, I really think that Mr. ——'s demand is unreasonable, as his wife's constitution is tender, and her temper fretful. A true philosopher would consider these circumstances, but a pedant is always throwing his system in your face, and applies it equally to all things, times, and places,

just like a tailor who would make a coat out of his own head, without any regard to the bulk or figure of the person that must wear it. All those fine-spun arguments that he has drawn from Nature to stop your mouths, weigh, I must own to you, but very little with me.—This same Nature is indeed a specious word, nay, there is a great deal in it if it is properly understood and applied, but I cannot bear to hear people using it to justify what common sense must disavow. Is not Nature modified by art in many things? Was it not designed to be so? And is it not happy for human society that it is so? Would you like to see your husband let his beard grow, until he would be obliged to put the end of it in his pocket, because this beard is the gift of Nature? The instincts of Nature point out neither tailors, nor weavers, nor mantua-makers, nor sempsters, nor milliners; and yet I am very glad that we don't run naked like the Hottentots. But not to wander from the subject—I grant that Nature has furnished the mother with milk to nourish her child; but I maintain at the same time, that if she can find better milk elsewhere, she ought to prefer it without hesitation. I don't see why she should have more scruple to do this, than her husband has to leave the clear fountain, which Nature gave him, to quench his thirst, for stout October, port, or claret. Indeed, if Mrs. —— was a buxom, sturdy woman, who lived on plain food, took regular exercise, enjoyed proper returns of rest, and was free from violent passions (which you and I know is not the case), she might be a good nurse for her child; but as matters stand, I do verily think that the milk of a good comely cow, who feeds quietly in her meadow, never devours ragouts, nor drinks ratifia, nor frets at quadrille, nor sits up till three in the morning elated with gain or dejected with loss,—I do think that the milk of such a cow, or of a nurse that came as near it as possible, would be likely to nourish the young squire much better than hers. If it be true that the child sucks in the mother's passions with her milk, this is a strong argument in favour of the cow, unless you may be afraid that the young squire may become a calf; but how many calves are there

both in State and Church, who have been brought up with their mothers' milk!

I promise faithfully to communicate to no mortal the letter you wrote me last. What you say of the two rebel lords, I believe to be true; but I can do nothing in the matter. If my projects don't fail in the execution, I shall see you before a month passes. Give my service to Dr. Blackbeard. He is a good man, but I never saw in my life such a persecuting face cover a humane and tender heart. I imagine (within myself) that the Smithfield priests, who burned the Protestants in the time of Queen Mary, had just such faces as the doctor's. If we were Papists, I should like him very much for my confessor; his seeming austerity would give you and I a great reputation for sanctity, and his good indulgent heart would be the very thing that would suit us in the affair of penance and ghostly direction.

Farewell, my dear lady, &c. &c.

FROM MR. JAMES CRAGGS.¹

Cockpit, July 25, 1720.

MADAM,—I will not fail to insert your ladyship's name in my list for the next South Sea subscription, though I am not sure whether the directors will receive another from me.² I am, with great respect, madam,

Your ladyship's most obedient humble servant.

FROM SARAH DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Windsor Lodge, Sept. 25 [1722].

YOUR letter (dear Lady Mary) is so extremely kind upon the subject of poor dear Lord³ Sunderland, that I cannot help thanking you, and assuring you that I shall always return

¹ Mr. Craggs, who was secretary of state, was deeply implicated in the South Sea scheme, and died before its detection. His father was censured by Parliament.—D.

² The stock was at this moment at its highest point, being on the 1st of July and 1st of August at "950 with the dividend." On the 1st of September it had fallen to 770: on the 1st of October to 280.—T.

³ Her son-in-law, Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, died April 19, 1722; and his only child died two days later from inoculation for the small-pox, the countess being at the time *enceinte*.—T.

your goodness to me in the best manner I can. It is a cruel misfortune to lose so valuable a young man in all respects, though his successor has all the virtues that I could wish for, but still it is a heavy affliction to me to have one droop so untimely from the only branch that I can ever hope to receive any comfort from, in my own family. Your concern for my health is very obliging, but as I have gone through so many misfortunes,¹ some of which were very uncommon, it is plain that nothing will kill [me] but distempers and physicians.

Pray do me the favour to present my humble service to Mr. Wortley, and to your agreeable daughter; and believe me as I am very sincerely,

Dear madam,

Your most faithful and most humble servant.

TO THE HONOURABLE MISS CALTHORPE.²

London, Dec. 7 [1723].

My knight-errantry is at an end, and I believe I shall, henceforth, think freeing of galley-slaves, and knocking down windmills, more laudable undertakings than the defence of any woman's reputation whatever. To say truth, I have never had any great esteem for the generality of the fair sex, and my only consolation for being of that gender has been the assurance it gave me of never being married to any one among them. But I own at present I am so much out of humour with the actions of Lady Holderness, that I never was so heartily ashamed of my petticoats before. You know, I suppose, that by this discreet match³ she renounces the care of her children; and I am laughed at by all my acquaintance for my faith in her honour and understanding. My only refuge is the sincere hope that she is out of her senses; and taking herself for Queen of Sheba, and Mr. Mildmay for King

¹ The great Duke of Marlborough died June the 10th, 1722. This, and the facts above stated, explain the duchess's allusion to "uncommon misfortunes."—T.

² Addressed "To the Honourable Mrs. Calthorpe, at Elvetham, near Hartford-bridge, Hampshire." She was one of the daughters of Henry first Viscount Longueville, whose son was created Earl of Sussex.—T.

³ See notes on the Letters to Lady Mar.—T.

Solomon. I do not think it quite so ridiculous. But the men, you may well imagine, are not so charitable: and they agree in the kind reflection, that nothing hinders women from playing the fool, but not having it in their power. The many instances that are to be found to support this opinion ought to make the few reasonable men valued,—but where are the reasonable ladies? Dear madam, come to town, that I may have the honour of saying there is one in St. James's-place.¹

FROM DR. YOUNG.

[About February, 1724.]

MADAM,—A great cold and a little intemperance has given me such a face as I am ashamed to show, though I much want to talk with your ladyship. For my theatrical measures are broken; Mariamne brought its author above 1500*l.*, The Captives above 1000*l.*, and Edwin,² now in rehearsal, has already, before acting, brought its author above 1000*l.* Mine, when acted, will not more than pay for the paper on which it is written; but the moment I get abroad I will wait on your ladyship, and explain further. Only this at present, for the reason mentioned, I am determined to suppress my play for this season at least. The concern you showed for its success is my apology for this account, which were otherwise very impertinent. I am, madam,

Your ladyship's much obliged

And most obedient humble servant.

FROM LADY PEMBROKE.

MADAM,—My Lord Pembroke agrees with your ladyship, that it is a great surprise to him to know that you are the person that copied the inscription, but at the same time desires I will assure you that it is the most agreeable one he

¹ Miss Calthorpe died in the year following the assumed date of this letter. The Weekly Journal of Saturday, June 6, 1724, announces that "the Honourable Mrs. Calthorpe, sister to the Earl of Sussex, died last week in St. James's-place."—T.

² Mariamne was written by Pope's coadjutor, Fenton; The Captives, by Gay; Edwin, a tragedy by George Jeffreys, was produced at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn-fields in February, 1724.—T.

ever met with; and, if you will give him leave, with the utmost pleasure will wait on you this evening, betwixt six and seven; and though I know nothing of inscriptions, yet I cannot deny myself the satisfaction of going with him to the most agreeable conversation in the world; there being no one more sensible of your merit than your ladyship's

Most obedient humble servant.¹

¹ Mary Howe, daughter of Lord Viscount Howe, married to Thomas eighth Earl of Pembroke, 1725, the Lord Pembroke who collected the statues and medals at Wilton, and whose knowledge of classical antiquity might therefore make his praise flattering to Lady Mary Wortley. He had been a principal member of the Whig administrations under King William and Queen Anne, and the last person who held the office of Lord High Admiral; but now being old, and a great humorist, distinguished himself chiefly by odd whims and peculiarities; one of which was a fixed resolution not to believe that anything he disliked ever did or could happen. One must explain this by instances. He chose that his eldest son should always live in the house with him, while unmarried. The son, who was more than of age, and had a will of his own, often chose to live elsewhere. But let him be ever so distant, or stay away ever so long, his father still insisted on supposing him present, every day gravely bidding the butler tell Lord Herbert dinner was ready; and the butler every day as gravely bringing word that "his lordship dined abroad."

Marrying for the third time at seventy-five, he maintained strict dominion over a wife, whom other people thought safely arrived at years of discretion, and quite fit to take care of herself. She had leave to visit in an evening, but must never, on any account, stay out a minute later than ten o'clock, his supper hour. One night, however, she stayed till past twelve. He declined supping, telling the servants it could not be ten o'clock, as their lady was not come home. When at last she came in a terrible fright, and began making a thousand apologies, "My dear," said he very coolly, "you are under a mistake, it is but just ten:—your watch, I see, goes too fast, and so does mine: we must have the man to-morrow to set them to rights; meanwhile, let us go to supper."

His example on another occasion might be worth following. Of all the Medea-and-Persian laws established in his house, the most peremptory was, that any servant who once got drunk should be instantly discharged, no pardon granted, no excuse listened to. Yet an old footman, who had lived with him many years, would sometimes indulge in a pot of ale extraordinary, trusting to the wilful blindness which he saw assumed when convenient. One fatal day even this could not avail. As my lord crossed the hall, John appeared in full view; not rather tipsy, or a little disguised, but dead drunk and unable to stand. Lord P. went up to him: "My poor fellow, what ails you? you seem dreadfully ill,—let me feel your pulse. God bless us, he is in a raging fever,—get him to bed directly, and send for the apothecary." The apothecary came, not to be consulted, for his lordship was physician-general in his own family; but to obey orders,—to bleed the patient copiously, clap a huge blister on his back, and give him a powerful dose of physic. After a few days of this treatment, when the fellow emerged weak and wan as the severest illness could have left him, "Hah, honest John," cried his master, "I am truly glad to see thee alive; you have had a wonderful escape though, and ought to be thankful—very thankful indeed. Why, man, if I had not passed by and spied the condition you were in, you would have been dead before now. But John! John!" (lifting up his finger), "NO MORE OF THESE FEVERS."—W.

FROM LADY PEMBROKE.

MADAM,—My lord says, in reading your most ingenious descriptions, he observed that your ladyship had the art of making common circumstances agreeable; as the lady's care of her lace in the storm, &c.¹ You have also made learned things instructive, as the copy of the Greek inscription; the which my lord desires that your ladyship will be pleased to send him again by the bearer, that he may better understand it than by one he has; care will be taken to return it safe again. Though this is my lord's letter, yet I must beg leave to add to it, that I am, with the most unfeigned esteem, your ladyship's

Most obedient humble servant.

Friday evening.

FROM DR. YOUNG.

March the 1st, 1725-6.

MADAM,—I have seen Mr. Savage,² who is extremely sensible of the honour your ladyship did him by me. You was, I find, too modest in your opinion of the present you pleased to make him, if Mr. Savage may be allowed to be a judge in the case. I am obliged to go down to-morrow to *Wycombe election*, which is on Thursday; as soon as I return, I will wait on your ladyship with the trifle you [were] pleased to ask, which I had done before, but I have been, and still am, in all the uneasiness a cold can give.

I am, madam, with great esteem,

Your ladyship's most obedient

And obliged humble servant.

FROM DR. YOUNG.

MADAM,—The more I think of your criticisms, the more I feel the just force of them: I will alter which [*sic*] are alterable; those that are not I beg you to make a secret of, and to make

¹ See letter of October 31, O.S. [1718], among Letters during the Embassy.—T.

² Richard Savage, the alleged son of the Countess of Macclesfield. The "present" made to him by Lady Mary, to which the writer alludes, was no doubt the customary fee for Savage's dedication to her of his *Miscellanies*, published in this year.—T.

an experiment on the sagacity of the town, which I think may possibly overlook what you have observed, for the players and Mr. Dodington,¹ neither of whom were backward in finding fault, or careless in attention, took no notice of the flaw in D.'s [Demetrius's] honour, or Erixene's conduct,² and I would fain have their blindness continue till my business is done; the players are fond of it, and as it has been said on a point of a little more importance, *si populus vult decipi, decipiatur*.

I am, madam,

Your most obedient and most humble servant.

[*Postscript.*].—Madam,—Your alteration in the fifth act will be of exceeding advantage in more views than one. I will wait on your ladyship with it as soon as I have done it, which will be, I believe, Monday morning. But that I'm satisfied you want no inducement to assist me as much as you can, I should add that I have more depending on the success of this particular piece than your ladyship imagines.

Friday noon.

FROM JOHN LORD HERVEY.

Bath, October 8 [1728].

I HAD too much pleasure in receiving your ladyship's commands to have any merit in obeying them, and should be very insincere if I pretended that my inclination to converse with you, could ever be a second motive to my doing it. I came to this place but yesterday, from which you may imagine I am not yet sufficiently qualified to execute the commission you gave me; which was, to send you a list of the sojourners and inmates of this place; but there is so universal an affinity and resemblance among these individuals, that a small paragraph will serve amply to illustrate what you have to depend upon. The Duchess of Marlborough, Congreve, and Lady Rich, are the only people whose faces I know, whose names I ever heard,

¹ George Bubb Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe-Regis.—T.

² This alludes to Young's tragedy of *The Brothers*. Its production was delayed, and the play was finally withdrawn by the author upon his being appointed chaplain to George the Second in 1728. Dr. Johnson informs us that the tragedy was then "in rehearsal," and that "the managers resigned it with some reluctance to the delicacy of the new clergyman."—T.

or who, I believe, have any names belonging to them; the rest are a swarm of wretched beings, some with half their limbs, some with none, the ingredients of Pandora's box *personifié*, who stalk about, half-living remembrancers of mortality; and by calling themselves human, ridicule the species more than Swift's Yahoos. I do not meet a creature without saying to myself as Lady — did of her femme de chambre, *Regardez cet animal, considérez ce néant, voilà une belle âme pour être immortelle*. This is giving you little encouragement to venture among us, but the sincerity with which I have delineated this sketch of our coterie at Bath, will at least persuade you, I hope, madam, to believe, I can give up my interest to my truth, and induce you to believe I never strain the latter, when I assure you, in the strongest terms, I am with the greatest warmth and esteem, madam,

Your ladyship's most obedient humble servant.

I write from Lindsay's, in more noise than the union of ten cockpits could produce, and Lady Rich teasing me at every word to have done, and begin a quadrille, which she cannot make up without me.

FROM JOHN LORD HERVEY.¹

Bath, October 28 [1728].

YOUR suspicions with regard to the Duchess of Marlborough are utterly groundless; she neither knew to whom I was writing, nor that I ever had the pleasure of a letter from you in my life. The speech you had cooked up for her was delightful, exactly her style, and word for word what she would infallibly have said, had she been in the situation you supposed. How far I made free with your letter I will nakedly confess: I read two or three things to her out of it, relating to the coronation; but upon my honour, without giving the least hint from whence it came, and by a thing she said three days afterwards, I found she guessed Lord Chesterfield to be my correspondent. If I went further in this step than you would

¹ Indorsed by Mr. Wortley Montagu "Lord Hervey, from Bath."—T.

have me, give me absolution upon my confession of my fault, and I will give you my word never to repeat it. This preliminary article settled, I beg for the future our commerce may be without any restraint; that you will allow me the liberty of communicating my thoughts naturally; and that you would conclude yourself safe in doing so to me, till I cease to have the least grain of natural, grateful, or political honesty in my whole composition. I will not make the common excuse for a dull letter, of writing from a dull place; it is one I never allowed, and one I never will make use of: if people have the gift of entertaining belonging to them, they must be so, writing to you, be it from what place it will; and when they fail of being so, it is no more for want of materials, than materials could make them so without genius. Boileau can write upon a *Lutrin* what one can read with pleasure a thousand times, and Blackmore cannot write upon the *Creation* anything that one shall not yawn ten times over, before one has read it once. You see I am arguing fairly, though against myself, and that if I am stupid I have at least candour enough to own it an inherent defect, and do not (as ill gamesters complain of their luck) impute the faults of my understanding to accident or chance. I cannot say neither that my manner of passing my time here is at all disagreeable, for you must know I have an ungentle happiness in my temper that gives me a propensity to being pleased with the people I happen to be with, and the things I happen to be doing. As to your manner of living at Twickenham, I entirely disapprove it. Nature never designed you to perform the offices of a groom and a nursery-maid; if you would be sincere, you must own, *riding* is inverting her dictates in your search of pleasure, or you must confess yourself an example of the maxim which I laid down, and you controverted so warmly two nights before I left London. I have met with several accumulated proofs since I saw you, that confirm me more and more in that faith; and begin to think it impossible I should change my religion, unless you will be so good to take my conversion into your own hands. I must tell you, too, that Thomas of Didymus

and I are so alike in our way of thinking, that * * * * *. I must be confuted in the same manner that Daphne, in the *Aminta*, says she was: “Mi mostrava più l’ombra d’una breve notte, che mille giorni di più chiari soli: e la più forte prova di quell’argomento si trova nelle parole, no, ma in silenzio.” It is so long since I read this, that it is more than possible I may quote it false; but to speak in her Grace of Marlborough’s style, *you know what I mean*. If you do not dislike long letters, and an unstudied galimatias of tout ce qui se trouve au bout de la plume (comme dit Madame de Sévigné), let me know it; and if you would not have me think it flattery when you tell me you do not, encourage the trade, not only by accepting my bills, but making quick returns. Adieu, I am stayed for to dinner; but if the omitting a respectful conclusion with three or four half lines to express warmth, truth, obedience, humility, &c., shocks your pride, give me a hint of it in your next, and I will take care never again to retrench those fees, due to ladies of your wit, beauty, and quality.

TO DR. ARBUTHNOT.¹

Oct. 17 [1730?].

SIR,—I have this minute received your letter, and cannot remember I ever was so much surprised in my life; the whole contents of it being a matter of astonishment. I give you sincere and hearty thanks for your intelligence, and the obliging manner of it. I have ever valued you as a gentleman both of sense and merit, and will join with you in any method you can contrive to prevent or punish the authors of so horrid a villany. I am with much esteem,

Your humble servant.

TO DR. ARBUTHNOT.

[October, 1730.?]]

SIR,—Since I saw you I have made some inquiries, and heard more, of the story you was so kind to mention to me. I am told Pope has had the surprising impudence to assert he

¹ This and the other letters to Arbuthnot in this section are given from the originals in the possession of W. H. Baillie, Esq.—T.

can bring the lampoon when he pleases to produce it, under my own hand; I desire he may be made to keep to this offer. If he is so skilful in counterfeiting hands, I suppose he will not confine that great talent to the gratifying his malice, but take some occasion to increase his fortune by the same method, and I may hope (by such practices) to see him exalted according to his merit, which nobody will rejoice at more than myself. I beg of you, sir (as an act of justice), to endeavour to set the truth in an open light, and then I leave to your judgment the character of those who have attempted to hurt mine in so barbarous a manner. I can assure you (in particular) you named a lady to me (as abused in this libel) whose name I never heard before, and as I never had any acquaintance with Dr. Swift,¹ am an utter stranger to all his affairs and even his

¹ Although there is no date to this and the preceding letter, the affair to which they relate may be inferred with something like certainty. Young's "Two Epistles to Mr. A. Pope," published in 1730, were quickly followed by a scurrilous and indecent poem, entitled "One Epistle to Mr. Alexander Pope, occasioned by Two Epistles lately published." This poem attacks with great bitterness not only Pope, but his friends Arbuthnot, Gay, and Swift, and concludes with what is perhaps the earliest allusion in print to Swift's alleged *liaison* with Miss Vanhomrigh:

"So when Vanessa yielded up her charms,
The blest Cadenus languished in her arms,
Iligh on a peg his unbrushed beaver hung,
* * * * *

Raptured he lies, deans, authors, are forgot,
Wood's copper pence and Atterbury's plot."

The libel was afterwards attributed to the joint labours of Pope's enemies, Welsted and James Moore Smythe, and Pope is subsequently supposed to allude to it in the line:

"Three thousand suns went down on Welsted's lie."

But that he once suspected, or pretended to suspect, Lady Mary of having had a hand in it, there can be little doubt. The attacks in the "One Epistle" were replied to in an article in the Grub-street Journal, a paper which Pope is suspected of having projected, and to which he was at least a frequent contributor. The defence is long and elaborate, deals with facts which could scarcely have been known to any one but Pope himself, and employs language closely resembling passages in Pope's letters not then published. Among others, the writer ironically appeals to "a lady (*supposed to have had some hand in this piece*) who has confidently reported he was once whipped;" which clearly refers to Lady Mary, whom Pope accused of writing a narrative of a supposed whipping administered to the poet "in Ham Walks," entitled "A Pop upon Pope." Pope may possibly have been aware of some connexion between Lady Mary and J. Roberts, the publisher of the "One Epistle;" for Roberts, whether by her connivance or not, published in 1716 three of her Town Eclogues. He was also the publisher, in 1733, of the verses to the Imitator alluded to in the next letter; and when Lady Mary's son absconded from school in 1726, an advertisement in the newspapers, offering a reward of "Twenty pounds and reasonable charges" for his detection, directed all information to be forwarded "to Mr. James Roberts, near Stationers' Hall."—T.

person, which I never saw to my knowledge, and am now convinced the whole is a contrivance of Pope's to blast the reputation of one who never injured him. I am not more sensible of his injustice, than I am, sir, of your [*sic*] candour, generosity, and good sense I have found in you, which has obliged me to be with a very uncommon warmth your real friend, and I heartily wish for an opportunity of showing I am so more effectually than by subscribing myself your very

Humble servant.

FROM HENRY FIELDING.

Wednesday evening.

MADAM,—I have presumed to send your ladyship a copy of the play which you did me the honour of reading three acts of last spring, and hope it may meet as light a censure from your ladyship's judgment as then; for while your goodness permits me (what I esteem the greatest, and indeed only happiness of my life) to offer my unworthy performances to your perusal, it will be entirely from your sentence that they will be regarded, or disesteemed by me. I shall do myself the honour of calling at your ladyship's door to-morrow at eleven, which, if it be an improper hour, I beg to know from your servant what other time will be more convenient. I am, with the greatest respect and gratitude, madam,

Your ladyship's most obedient,

Most devoted humble servant.

FROM HENRY FIELDING.¹

London, Sept. 4 [1731].

I HOPE your ladyship will honour the scenes, which I presume to lay before you, with your perusal. As they are written on a model I never yet attempted, I am exceedingly anxious lest they should find less mercy from you than my lighter productions. It will be a slight compensation to *The Modern Husband*, that your ladyship's censure will defend him from the possibility of any other reproof, since your least approbation will always give me pleasure, infinitely superior to

¹ I have not found the original of this letter.—T.

the loudest applauses of a theatre. For whatever has past your judgment, may, I think, without any imputation of immodesty, refer want of success to want of judgment in an audience. I shall do myself the honour of waiting on your ladyship at Twickenham next Monday, to receive my sentence, and am, madam, with the most devoted respect,

Your ladyship's most obedient, most humble servant.

FROM SARAH DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Blenheim, Sept. 18, 1731.

YOU are always very good to me, dear Lady Mary, and I am as sensible of it as I ought to be. All things are agreed upon, and the writings drawing for Di's marriage with my Lord John Russell,¹ which is in every particular to my satisfaction; but they cannot be married till we come to London. I propose more satisfaction in it than I thought had been in store for me. I believe you have heard me say that I desired to die when I had disposed well of her; but I desire that you would not put me in mind of it, for I find now I have a mind to live till I have married my Torismond, which name I have given long to John Spencer.² I am in such hurries of business that I must end, when I have assured you that I am

Your most faithful and obedient humble servant.

My hand is lame, and I cannot write myself, which is the better for you.³

TO DR. ARBUTHNOT.

Jan. 3 [1735].

SIR,—I have perused the last lampoon of your ingenious friend, and am not surprised you did not find me out under the name of Sappho, because there is nothing I ever heard in our characters or circumstances to make a parallel, but as the town (except you, who know better) generally suppose Pope means me, whenever he mentions that name, I cannot help

¹ The duchess's granddaughter, Lady Diana Spencer, was married on the 11th of October, 1731, to Lord John Russell, afterwards fourth Duke of Bedford.—T.

² A brother of Lady Diana, afterwards father of the first Lord Spencer.—T.

³ The duchess's handwriting is not easy to decipher.—T.

taking notice of the horrible malice he bears against the lady signified by that name, which appears to be irritated by supposing her writer of the verses to the Imitator of Horace. Now I can assure him they were wrote (without my knowledge) by a gentleman of great merit, whom I very much esteem,¹ who he will never guess, and who, if he did know, he durst not attack; but I own the design was so well meant, and so excellently executed, that I cannot be sorry they were written. I wish you would advise poor Pope to turn to some more honest livelihood than libelling; I know he will allege in his excuse that he must write to eat, and he is now grown sensible that nobody will buy his verses except their curiosity is piqued to it, to see what is said of their acquaintance; but I think this method of gain so exceeding vile that it admits of no excuse at all. Can anything be more detestable than his abusing poor Moore,² scarce cold in his grave, when it is plain he kept back his poem, while he lived, for fear he should beat him for it? This is shocking to me, though of a man I never spoke to and hardly knew by sight; but I am seriously concerned at the worse scandal he has heaped on Mr. Congreve,³ who was my friend, and whom I am obliged to justify, because I can do it on my own knowledge, and, which is yet farther, bring witness of it, from those who were then often with me, that he was so far from loving Pope's rhyme, both that and his conversation were perpetual jokes to him, exceeding despicable in his opinion, and he has often made us laugh in talking of them, being particularly pleasant on that subject. As to Pope's being born of honest parents, I verily believe it, and will add one praise to his mother's character, that (though I only knew her very old) she always appeared to me to have much better sense than himself. I desire, sir, as a favour,

¹ Lord Hervey, whom Pope had suspected of a joint authorship of the satire alluded to long before the date of this letter. As to the question of authorship, see note on the poem.—T.

² James Moore Smythe, whom Pope attacked in his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, here referred to. It is unfortunate for Lady Mary's theory that Pope had attacked him still more bitterly in other writings published in Moore Smythe's lifetime.—T.

³ Alluding to the line:

"And Congreve loved and Swift endured my lays."—T.

that you would show this letter to Pope, and you will very much oblige, sir,

Your humble servant.

FROM LORD PETERBOROUGH.¹

MADAM,—I was very unwilling to have my name made use of in an affair in which I have no concern, and therefore would not engage myself to speak to Mr. Pope; but he coming to my house the moment you went away, I gave him as exact an account as I could of our conversation.

He said to me what I had taken the liberty to say to you, that he wondered how the town would apply these lines to any but some noted common woman; that he should yet be more surprised if you should take them to yourself; he named to me four remarkable poetesses and scribblers, Mrs. Centlivre, Mrs. Haywood, Mrs. Manley, and Mrs. Ben [Behn], ladies famous, indeed, in their generation, and some of them esteemed to have given very unfortunate favours to their friends, assuring me that such only were the objects of his satire.

I hope this assurance will prevent your further mistake, and any consequence upon so odd a subject. I have nothing more to add.

Your ladyship's most humble and obedient servant.²

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.³

July 17 [1736].

MY LORD,—I am ashamed to give your lordship so much trouble about this trifle after all the good nature and generosity you have showed on this subject; but it seems you forgot the

¹ From Ruffhead's Life of Pope, 1769.—T.

² Pope was on terms of such close intimacy with Peterborough, that it may be safely assumed that this clever answer to Lady Mary's somewhat impolitic complaints was dictated by Pope himself.—T.

³ Thomas Wentworth Lord Raby, created Viscount Wentworth and Earl of Strafford in 1711. He was noted for his pride; and refused to be associated with Prior in negotiations with Holland for the peace. After the accession of George I. he was deprived of his offices and impeached, but was not tried. He was a neighbour of Lady Mary's at Twickenham. This and the following letter are now printed from the originals among the Strafford papers in the British Museum.—T.

name of your petitioner, which is Elizabeth White. The vacancy has now happened; but she is refused admittance, except your lordship gives her name under your hand. I beg you would be so good to enclose a note to that purpose to me, and I hope you will have no further trouble on this affair, but the obligation shall be ever gratefully remembered and acknowledged by

My lord, your lordship's most obedient humble servant.

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

July 29, 1736.

MY LORD,—You know how to do the most obliging thing in the most obliging manner. In telling me that I have given you pleasure, you do not only take from me the shame of being troublesome, but have found a way to make me pleased with myself, since I never can employ my time more to my own satisfaction than in showing your lordship that I am, with the utmost gratitude and esteem,

My lord, your lordship's most obedient humble servant.

LETTERS

TO

THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET AND OTHERS.

1738—1762.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.¹

July 26, O.S., 1738.

I HOPE, dear madam, you find at least some amusement in your travels,² and though I cannot wish you to forget those friends in England, who will never forget you, yet I should be pleased to hear you were so far entertained as to take off all anxiety from your mind. I know you are capable of many pleasures that the herd of mankind are insensible of; and wherever you go I do not doubt you will find some people that will know how to taste the happiness of your conversation. We are as much blinded in England by politics and

¹ Lady Pomfret was a granddaughter of the infamous "Judge Jeffreys," and daughter of John Lord Jeffreys of Wem, and Charlotte Herbert, daughter of Philip Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. She married, in 1720, Thomas Fermor Earl of Pomfret. He was master of the horse to Queen Caroline, to whom Lady Pomfret was one of the ladies of the bedchamber. After the queen's death in 1737, Lord and Lady Pomfret went abroad for several years. See allusion to Lady Pomfret in *Introductory Anecdotes*.—T.

² Lady Pomfret was at this time in France.—T.

views of interest¹ as we are by mists and fogs, and 'tis necessary to have a very uncommon constitution not to be tainted with the distempers of our climate. I confess myself very much infected with the epidemical dulness; yet, as 'tis natural to excuse one's own faults as much as possible, I am apt to flatter myself that my stupidity is rather accidental than real; at least, I am sure that I want no vivacity when I think of my Lady Pomfret, and that it is with the warmest inclination as well as the highest esteem that I am ever affectionately yours.

Here is no alteration since you left us except in the weather, and I would not entertain you with the journal of the thermometer. I hope to hear soon from you.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

1738.

I AM afraid so quick a return of thanks will frighten your ladyship from a continuance of this correspondence, but I cannot help gratifying myself in saying something, yet I dare not say half I think of your delightful letter; though nobody but myself could read it, and call anything complimentary that could be said of it.

'Tis as impossible to send an equivalent out of this stupid town, as it would be to return a present of the fruits of Provence out of Lapland. We have no news, no trade, no sun, and even our fools are all gone to play at Tunbridge, and those that remain are only miserable invalids, who talk of nothing but infirmities and remedies, as ladies who are on the point of increasing the world, who speak of only nurses and midwives. I do not believe either Cervantes or Rabelais would be able to raise one moment's mirth from such subjects, and I acquit myself of writing stupidly from this place, as I should do Mr. Chloé,² if he was condemned to furnish an

¹ The long rule of Sir Robert Walpole was now drawing to a close, and the attacks of the Opposition becoming daily more formidable.—T.

² "Monsieur Chloé" was a French cook in the service of the Duke of Newcastle. He is alluded to in the following anecdote of Pulteney, which appears in "The Characters of Lord Chesterfield Reviewed," 1777 (p. 44): "The most agree-

entertainment out of rotten turnips and artichokes run to seed.

I was in this part of my letter when young Vaillant¹ arrived at my door with a very pretty box in the name of Lady Pomfret; there needed nothing to keep up my regard for you, yet I am deeply touched at every mark of your attention. I believe he thought me very unreasonable, for I insisted on it that he had also a letter. Let me entreat to hear often from you. If I had the utmost indifference for you, I should think your letters the greatest pleasure of my life; and if you deputed Lady Vane² to write for you, I could find a joy in reading her nonsense, if it informed me of your health. Judge, then, how important it is to me to hear from you, and with what sincere attachment I am ever yours.

I suppose your ladyship knows your friend Mr. West is in the happy state of honeymoon.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[September] 1738.

I BEGIN to think you are grown weary of so dull a correspondent. 'Tis a long time since I sent my last letter, which was full of acknowledgments for your obliging token and entertaining letter. I am impatient to hear how you like the place you are settled in, for settled I am told you are, though I was not informed exactly where, only that it is not far from

able part of Pulteney's character was his fondness for convivial pleasures,—in which he bore a very agreeable and shining part. But though he loved company, and gave dinners, the splendour of his entertainments was always sullied by the sordid economy of the treater. He once borrowed of the Duke of Newcastle, Monsieur Chloé, the celebrated cook, to prepare and superintend a dinner for the first people in the kingdom. Chloé was out of all patience to find his plan of entertainment curtailed by his avaricious employer; and left the house in a passion."—T.

¹ Probably a son of Paul Vaillant, a bookseller in the Strand, whose country-house at Twickenham adjoined Lady Mary's.—T.

² Lady Vane, whose autobiography, under the name of Lady Frail, was published in Smollett's "Peregrine Pickle." Her intrigues were notorious. She was a daughter of Mr. Hawes, of Purley in Berkshire, and was married, first, to Lord William Hamilton, and secondly, in 1735, to William second Viscount Vane of the kingdom of Ireland.—T.

Paris,¹ which I am very glad of, being persuaded you will find it much more pleasant, and every way as convenient as any of those distant provinces you talked of. I suppose it is no news to you that Lady Betty Finch² is married to Mr. Murray. People are divided in their opinions, as they commonly are, on the prudence of her choice. I am among those who think, *tout bien compté*, she has happily disposed of her person. Lord Townshend³ is spitting up his lungs at the Gravel-pits, and his charming lady⁴ diverting herself with daily rambles in town. She has made a new friendship, which is very delightful; I mean with Madame Pulteney; and they hunt in couples from tea-drinking till midnight.

I won't trouble you with politics, though the vicissitudes and conjectures are various. Lady Sundon⁵ drags on a miserable life; it is now said she has a cancerous humour in her throat, which, if true, is so dismal a prospect as would force compassion from her greatest enemies. I moralise in my own dressing-room on the events I behold, and pity those who are more concerned in them than myself; but I think of dear Lady Pomfret in a very different manner than I do of

¹ Lord and Lady Pomfret were at this time at Monts, near Paris.—T.

² Lady Betty Finch, daughter of Daniel Earl of Nottingham (the Dismal of Swift). It is very amusing to find that her marriage was thought an imprudent one, considering how naturally we connect the idea of every kind of eminence—talents, wisdom, wealth, and dignity—with the name of Lord Mansfield; the Mr. Murray here spoken of. But if Love is rash and blind, Prudence can sometimes be short-sighted.—W. The marriage took place on the 7th of September, 1738.—T.

³ The London Evening Post, of the 23rd of September, announces that his lordship came "yesterday" from "Kensington to his house in Grosvenor-square, for the advice of his physicians, being in a very ill state of health."—T.

⁴ Charles third Viscount Townshend, son of George the First's minister, married Andrey, or, as she chose to call herself, *Ethelreda* Harrison, the Lady Townshend whose wit and gallantries made so much noise during a great part of the last century;—the supposed original of Lady Bellaston in "Tom Jones," and Lady Tempest in "Pompey the Little." She was the mother of George the first Marquis Townshend, and of the famous Charles Townshend.—W.

⁵ Lady Sundon—Mrs. Clayton—the favourite confidential bedchamber woman of Queen Caroline; her husband was latterly made an Irish peer.—W. Lady Sundon was said to have received a pair of diamond earrings as a bribe for procuring the place of master of the horse to Queen Caroline for Lord Pomfret. Walpole hints at this in his "Reminiscences," and adds, "Decked with those jewels she paid a visit to the old duchess (Sarah Duchess of Marlborough), who, as soon as she was gone, said, 'What an impudent creature, to come here with her bribe in her ear.' 'Madam,' replied Lady Mary Wortley, who was present, 'how should people know where wine is sold unless a bush is hung out?'"—T.

princes and potentates, and am warmly interested in everything that regards her. Let me beg, then, to hear soon from you, and, if you will honour me so far, let me have a particular account how you pass your time. You can have no pleasure in which I shall not share, nor no uneasiness in which I shall not suffer; but I hope there is no reason to apprehend any, and that you are now in the perfect enjoyment of uninterrupted tranquillity, and have already forgot all the fogs and spleen of England. However, remember your less happy friends that feel the pain of your absence; and always number amongst them

Your faithful, &c. &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[October?] 1738.

YESTERDAY was very fortunate to me; it brought two of your ladyship's letters. I will not speak my thoughts of them, but must insist once for all that you lay aside all those phrases of *tiring me, ashamed of your dulness*, &c. &c. I can't help, when I read them, either doubting your sincerity, or fearing you have a worse opinion of my judgment than I desire you should have. Spare me those disagreeable reflections; and be assured, if I hated you, I should read your letters with pleasure; and that I love you enough to be charmed with hearing from you, though you knew not how to spell.

The delightful description of your retirement makes me wish to partake it with you; but I have been so much accustomed to wish in vain, that I dare not flatter myself with so pleasing an idea. We are wrapt up in fogs and consequential stupidity, which increases so visibly, we want but little of the state of petrification which was said to befall an African town. However, there remains still some lively people amongst us that play the fool with great alacrity. Lady Sophia Keppel¹ has declared her worthy choice of the amiable

¹ This must have been written before November 11, as the London Evening Post of that date announces that "Captain Thomas, late of the troop of Horse Guards, who married the Lady Sophia Keppel, sister to the Earl of Albemarle, is promoted to * * company of Foot at Gibraltar."—T.

Captain Thomas. Poor Lady Frances Montagu is on the point of renouncing the pomps and vanities of this world, and confining herself to rural shades with Sir Roger Burgoyne,¹ whose mansion-house will, I believe, perfectly resemble Mr. Sullen's;² but, as we are in dead peace, I am afraid there is no hope of a French count to enliven her solitude. It is reported a much greater, fairer lady³ is going to be disposed of to a much worse retreat, at least I should think so. 'Tis terrible to be the fifth in rank after having been the first, but such is the hard condition of our sex; women and priests never know where they shall eat their bread.

All the polite and the gallant are either gone or preparing for the Bath.⁴ You may suppose Lady Hervey would not fail appearing there, where I am told she has made a marvellous union with the Duchess of Manchester, and writes from thence that she is charmed with her grace's sweetness of temper. The Duchess of Richmond declares a design of passing the winter at Goodwood, where she has had a succession of *olios* of company. It is said very gravely that this loss to the town is occasioned by the suspension of operas. We have no less than fifty-three French strollers arrived to supply their place; and Monsieur de Cambis⁵ goes about with great solemnity negotiating to do them service. These are the most important events that are come to my knowledge; perhaps I should remember some more serious if I was so happy as to be with you. I am very glad to hear of the return of Lady Sophia's⁶ health and beauty. My dear Lady Pomfret has on all occasions my warmest wishes, and the truest esteem and affection of

Your faithful, &c. &c.

¹ Sir Roger married, in January following, Lady Frances Montagu, eldest daughter of the first Earl of Halifax.—T.

² Alluding to Farquhar's play of the *Beaux Stratagem*.—T.

³ Probably referring to the contemplated marriage of the king's daughter, the Princess Mary, with Frederick, Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, which took place on the 8th of May, 1740.—T.

⁴ The Prince and Princess of Wales were among the visitors. The London Evening Post, of September 28, says: "It is thought Bath will be fuller this season than ever known."—T.

⁵ The French ambassador.—T.

⁶ Lady Sophia Fermor, Lady Pomfret's daughter. See note, *post*, p. 101.—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[October] 1738.

THERE are some moments when I have so great an inclination to converse with dear Lady Pomfret, that I want but little of galloping to Paris to sit with you one afternoon; which would very well pay me for my journey. Though this correspondence has every charm in it to make a correspondence agreeable, yet I have still a thousand things to say and hear, which cannot be communicated at this distance. Our mobs¹ grow very horrible; here are a vast number of legs and arms that only want a head to make a very formidable body. But while we readers of history are, perhaps, refining too much, the happier part of our sex are more usefully employed in preparation for the birthday,² where I hear Lady Pembroke is to shine in a particular manner, and Lady Cowper³ to exhibit some new devices worthy of her genius. The Bath is the present scene of gallantry and magnificence, where many caresses are bestowed, not from admiration of the present, but from spite to the absent. The most remarkable circumstance I hear is a coolness in the Earl of Chesterfield, which occasions much speculation; it must be disagreeable to play an under-part in a second-rate theatre. To me that have always been an humble spectator, it appears odd, to see so few desirous to quit the stage, though time and infirmities have disabled them from making a tolerable figure there. Our drama is at present carried on by such whimsical management, I am half inclined to think we shall shortly have no plays at all. I begin to be of opinion that the new Northern actress has very good sense; she hardly appears at all, and by that conduct almost wears out the disapprobation of the public.⁴ I believe you are

¹ Serious riots broke out at Kingswood and Bristol in October. The magistrates of the latter town sent an express to Court with an account of the proceedings.—T.

² The king's birthday, 30th of October.—T.

³ Lady Henrietta d'Auverquerque, youngest daughter of the Earl of Grantham, married June 27, 1732, to William Earl Cowper.—T.

⁴ Sophia de Walmoden, afterwards Countess of Yarmouth. "The last instance," says Lord Stanhope, "in our annals of a British peerage bestowed upon a royal mistress." Madame Walmoden, or Walmonte, as the English journals spelt her name, arrived in England about the 15th of June, 1738, with her hus-

already tired with this long dissertation on so trifling a subject; I wish I could enliven my letter with some account of literature; but wit and pleasure are no more, and people play the fool with great impunity; being very sure there is not spirit enough left in the nation to set their follies in a ridiculous light. Pamphlets are the sole productions of our modern authors, and those profoundly stupid. To you that enjoy a purer air, and meet at least with vivacity whenever you meet company, this may appear extraordinary; but recollect, dear madam, in what condition you left us; and you will easily believe to what state we are fallen. I know nothing lively but what I feel in my own heart, and that only in what relates to your ladyship; in other respects I partake of the contagion, as you will plainly see by these presents; but I am ever, with the utmost affection,

Yours, &c. &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

1738.

I WILL say nothing of your complaints of your own dullness; I should say something very rough if I did; 'tis impossible to reconcile them to the sincerity that I am willing to flatter myself I find in the other parts of your letter. 'Tis impossible you should not be conscious that such¹ letters as

band, the baron. Their arrival created much gossip. The Duchess of Marlborough writes on the 20th: "This Madame de Walmond is at present in a mighty mean, dirty lodging in St. James's-street. Her husband came with her, but he is going away; and that house that was Mr. Seymour's in Hyde Park, which opens into the king's garden, is fitting up for her; and the Duchess of Kendal's lodgings are making ready for her at St. James's. There is nothing more known at present as to the settlement, but that directions are given for one upon the establishment of Ireland. Perhaps that mayn't exceed the Duchess of Kendal's, which was three thousand pounds a year." The "mean, dirty lodging," according to the newspapers, was at "Madame Peltier's, in St. James's-street," where the baron and his lady, upon their arrival, "had a great levee, after which they waited on his majesty at Kensington." The baroness's "great levees" are thus described in the London Evening Post of the 24th: "Last week, and this, several persons of distinction of both sexes had the honour to be presented to a foreign lady newly arrived here. The ceremonial as to precedence was exactly observed upon this occasion, being introduced one after another according to their respective ranks." Splendid entertainments were given to her by the nobility, who certainly do not appear to have been much shocked by the openness of royal profligacy.—T.

¹ It is difficult to believe these praises sincere. If they were, Lady Mary admired a style very unlike her own. A parcel of Lady Pomfret's letters, addressed

yours want not the trimmings of news, which are only necessary to the plain Spitalfields style, beginning with *hoping you are in good health*, and concluding *pray believe me to be*, &c. &c. You give me all the pleasure of an agreeable author; and I really wish you had leisure to give me all the length too, and that all your letters were to come to me in twelve tomes. You will stare at this impudent wish; but you know imagination has no bounds; and 'tis harder for me to be content with a moderate quantity of your writing, than it was for any South Sea director to resolve to get no more. This is a strange way of giving thanks; however, 'tis the clearest proof of my tasting my happiness in your correspondence, to beg so earnestly not only the continuance but the increase of it.

I hear of a new lady-errant, who is set forth to seek adventures at Paris, attended by her enchanter. These are Mrs. Bromley and Anthony Henley,¹ who, I am told, declares very gallantly that he designs to oblige her to sell her large jointure to furnish money for his *menus plaisirs*. This is the freshest news from the Island of Love. Amongst those bound for the golden coast (which are far more numerous), there arise every day new events. The Duchess of Northumberland's² will raises a great bustle among those branches of the royal blood. She has left a young niece, very pretty, lively enough, just fifteen, to the care of Captain Cole, who was director of Lady Bernard. The girl has three hundred pounds per annum allowed for her maintenance, but is never to touch her fortune till she marries, which she is not to do without his consent; and if she dies without issue, her twenty thousand pounds to be divided between the children of the Duchess of St. Albans

to Lady M. W. M., in England, were formerly in the possession of Lady Bute: they were grossly flattering, dull, pompous, and affected. One of them contained such a fulsome panegyric upon our most gracious and excellent sovereign (George II.), that Lady Bute, when she read it, exclaimed, "Why the woman surely must have meant this to be opened at the post-office."—W.

¹ Anthony Henley of the Grange, elder brother of the Chancellor Northington. He was said to have very good parts, but was a man of the most profligate and dissipated habits.—W.

² This Duchess of Northumberland must have been the widow of George Fitzroy, Charles the Second's youngest son by the Duchess of Cleveland.—W.

and Lord Litchfield. The heirs-at-law contest the fantastical will, and the present tittle-tattle of visits turns upon the subject.

Lord Townshend has renewed his lease of life by his French journey, and is at present situated in his house in Grosvenor-street in perfect health. My good lady is coming from the Bath to meet him with the joy you may imagine. Kitty Edwin has been the companion of his [her?] pleasures there. The alliance seems firmer than ever between them, after their Tunbridge battles,¹ which served for the entertainment of the public. The secret cause is variously guessed at; but it is certain Lady Townshend came into the great room gently behind her friend, and tapping her on the shoulder with her fan, said aloud, *I know where, how, and who*. These mysterious words drew the attention of all the company, and had such an effect upon poor Kitty, she was carried to her lodgings in strong hysterics. However, by the intercession of prudent mediators peace was concluded; and if the conduct of these heroines was considered in a true light, perhaps it might serve for an example even to higher powers, by showing that the surest method to obtain a lasting and honourable peace, is to begin with vigorous war. But leaving these reflections, which are above my capacity, permit me to repeat my desire of hearing often from you. Your letters would be my greatest pleasure if I had flourished in the first years of Henry the Eighth's court; judge then how welcome they are to me in the present desolate state of this deserted town of London.

Yours, &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

1738.

I SHOULD take your ladyship's question (whether I should always desire your friendship) very unkindly, if I was in the

¹ Lady Hertford also alludes to the "Tunbridge battles" in a letter to the Countess of Pomfret, of September 18, 1738. "I dare say you have heard from people who are better informed than I am of the quarrels which have taken place at Tunbridge, and which I am told have occasioned some very scandalous lampoons. The people concerned in them were my Lady Townshend and Mrs. Edwin."—*Hertford Corr.*, 2nd edit. i. 31.—T.

least disposed to quarrel with you ; it is very much doubting both my understanding and morals, two very tender points. But I am more concerned for your opinion of the last than the other, being persuaded 'tis easier for you to forgive an involuntary error of the head than a levity in the mind, of which (give me leave to say) I am utterly incapable ; and you must give me very great proofs of my being troublesome before you will be able to get rid of me. I passed two very agreeable evenings last week with Lady Bell Finch ;¹ we had the mutual pleasure of talking of you, and joined in very sincere wishes for your company.

The reasons of Lord Morpeth's² leaving Caen are variously told ; I believe Lady Carlisle is persuaded he was not properly used there ; I hear he is with his father at Venice : the whole seems odd ; but it is not possible to know the true motives of people's conduct in their families ; which may be very reasonable, when it does not appear so. Here are some few births, but neither marriages or burials worth mentioning. Lady Townshend has entertained the Bath with a variety of lively scenes ; and Lady Harriet Herbert³ furnished the tea-tables here with fresh tattle for this last fortnight. I was one of the first informed of her adventure by Lady Gage, who was told that morning by a priest, that she had desired him to marry her the next day to Beard, who sings in the farces at Drury Lane.⁴ He refused her that good office, and immediately told

¹ Another daughter of the Earl of Nottingham.—W.

² Lord Morpeth was then a youth, residing abroad for his health and education ; of course this relates to his being removed from one place to another ; it appears by other letters that he shortly after died.—W.

³ Lady Henrietta Herbert. Henrietta and Harriet were at one time frequently employed indifferently. So Prior, in a poem, addresses Henrietta Countess of Oxford as "Lady Harriet."—T.

⁴ John Beard, a well-known operatic singer and manager. Lady Henrietta Herbert, who was a daughter of the Earl of Waldegrave, had been singularly unfortunate in her first marriage to Lord Edward Herbert, who died four months after their marriage, and seven months before the birth of their daughter. Lady Henrietta had been four years a widow when she married Beard, and was still only twenty-two years of age. Their marriage was publicly announced in the *London Evening Post* on the 15th of January following. Lord Wharnccliffe speaks of Beard as "an indifferent character," but this appears to be a mistake. His contemporaries mention him with respect. Miss Hawkins, daughter of Sir John Hawkins, speaks in the highest terms of Beard, and mentions "his many virtues." She must have known him well, for she tells us that "Mr. Beard, the very respectable oratorio singer, was

Lady Gage, who (having been unfortunate in her friends) was frightened at this affair and asked my advice. I told her honestly, that since the lady was capable of such amours, I did not doubt if this was broke off she would bestow her person and fortune on some hackney-coachman or chairman; and that I really saw no method of saving *her* from ruin, and her *family* from dishonour, but by poisoning her; and offered to be at the expense of the arsenic, and even to administer it with my own hands, if she would invite her to drink tea with her that evening. But on her not approving that method, she sent to Lady Montacute, Mrs. Dunch, and all the relations within the reach of messengers. They carried Lady Harriet to Twickenham; though I told them it was a bad air for girls. She is since returned to London, and some people believe her to be married; others, that he is too much intimidated by Mr. Waldegrave's¹ threats to dare to go through the ceremony; but the secret is now public, and in what manner it will conclude I know not. Her relations have certainly no reason to be amazed at her constitution; but are violently surprised at the mixture of devotion that forces her to have recourse to the Church in her necessities; which has not been the road taken by the matrons of her family. Such examples are very detrimental to our whole sex; and are apt to influence the other into a belief that we are unfit to manage either liberty or money. These melancholy reflections make me incapable of a lively conclusion to my letter; you must accept of a very sincere one in the assurance that I am, dear madam,

Inviolably yours, &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[January, 1739.]

AMIDST the shining gallantries of the French court, I know not how you will receive a stupid letter from these regions of

one of my father's early acquaintance; and having married a lady of very high rank, was his near neighbour, residing very handsomely at Hampton."—*Anecdotes*, &c., collected by *Sophia Matilda Hawkins*, 1822, i. 13.—T.

¹ Probably one of the lady's brothers.—T.

dulness, where even our ridiculous actions (which are very frequent, I confess) have a certain air of formality that hinders them from being risible, at the same time that they are absurd. I think Lady Anne Lumley's¹ marriage may be reckoned into this number, who is going to espouse with great gravity a younger brother of Sir Thomas Frankland's. There are great struggles and many candidates for her place. Lady Anne Montagu, daughter to Lord Halifax, is one of them; and Lady Charlotte Rich, Lady Betty Herbert, and the incomparable Lady Bateman, are her competitors.

I saw Mrs. Bridgeman² the other day, who is much pleased with a letter she has had the honour to receive from your ladyship: she broke out, "*Really Lady Pomfret writes finely!*" I very readily joined in her opinion; she continued, "*Oh, so neat, no interlineations, and such proper distances!*" This manner of praising your style made me reflect on the necessity of attention to trifles, if one would please in general—a rule terribly neglected by me formerly; yet it is certain that some men are as much struck with the careless twist of a tippet, as others are by a pair of fine eyes.

Lady Vane³ is returned hither in company with Lord

¹ Sister of the then Earl of Scarborough. She married in February, 1739, Frederick Frankland, Esq., of Roehampton, Surrey, M.P. for Thirsk, and was succeeded in her place of lady of the bedchamber to the Princesses Amelia and Caroline by the Lady Anne Montagu, mentioned in the text. The story of Lady Frankland is a tragic one. She appears to have been as unhappy in her marriage as in her "court afflictions and resentments." Her husband took an almost insane dislike to her three weeks only after their marriage, laying no fault to her charge, but only declaring that she was his aversion, and threatening if she did not leave him to kill her or himself. The lady, after begging in vain to be allowed to remain under his roof, accordingly parted with him, receiving back her fortune, with an allowance from her husband of six hundred pounds a year, and a thousand pounds to buy a house. Poor Lady Frankland survived this trouble but a twelve-month.—T.

² A daughter of Sir Orlando Bridgeman.—T.

³ See note on letter to Lady Pomfret, *antè*, p. 26. The lady's liaison with Lord Berkeley appears nearly three years later to have been still matter of public scandal; for Horace Walpole, in a letter to Mann, of November 23, 1741, thus alludes to it: "You cannot imagine what an entertaining fourth act of the opera we had the other night. Lord Vane in the middle of the pit making love to my lady [his wife]. The Duke of Newcastle has lately given him three score thousand pounds to consent to cut off the entail of the Newcastle estate. The fool immediately wrote to his wife to beg she would return to him from Lord Berkeley, that he had got so much money and now they might live *comfortably*; but she will not live *comfortably*. She is at Lord Berkeley's house, whither go divers after

Berkeley, and went with him in public to Cranford, where they remain as happy as love and youth can make them. I am told that though she does not pique herself upon fidelity to any one man (which is but a narrow way of thinking), she boasts that she has always been true to her nation, and, notwithstanding foreign attacks, has always reserved her charms for the use of her own countrymen. I forget you are at Paris, and 'tis not polite to trouble you with such long scrawls as might perhaps be supportable at Monts; but you must give me leave to add, that I am, with a true sense of your merit, for ever yours, in the largest extent of that expression.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

1738. [March, 1739.]

I AM so well acquainted with the lady you mention, that I am not surprised at any proof of her want of judgment; she is one of those who has passed upon the world vivacity in the place of understanding; for me, who think with Boileau,

“ Rien n'est beau que le vrai, le vrai seul est aimable,”

I have always thought those geniuses much inferior to the plain sense of a cookmaid, who can make a good pudding and keep the kitchen in good order.

Here is no news to be sent you from this place, which has been for this fortnight and still continues overwhelmed with politics, and which are of so mysterious a nature, one ought to have some of the gifts of Lilly or Partridge to be able to write about them; and I leave all those dissertations to those distinguished mortals who are endowed with the talent of divination; though I am at present the only one of my sex who seems to be of that opinion, the ladies having shown their zeal and appetite for knowledge in a most glorious manner. At the last warm debate in the House of Lords, it was unanimously resolved there should be no crowd of unnecessary auditors; consequently the fair sex were excluded, and the gallery

her.” Neither of Lady Vane's husbands appears to have been famous for good sense.—T.

destined to the sole use of the House of Commons. Notwithstanding which determination, a tribe of dames resolved to show on this occasion that neither men nor laws could resist them. These heroines were Lady Huntingdon,¹ the Duchess of Queensberry, the Duchess of Ancaster, Lady Westmoreland, Lady Cobham, Lady Charlotte Edwin, Lady Archibald Hamilton and her daughter, Mrs. Scott, and Mrs. Pendarves, and Lady Frances Saunderson. I am thus particular in their names, since I look upon them to be the boldest assertors, and most resigned sufferers for liberty, I ever read of. They presented themselves at the door at nine o'clock in the morning, where Sir William Saunderson respectfully informed them the Chancellor had made an order against their admittance. The Duchess of Queensberry, as head of the squadron, pished at the ill-breeding of a mere lawyer, and desired him to let them up stairs privately. After some modest refusals, he swore by G— he would not let them in. Her grace, with a noble warmth, answered, by G— they would come in in spite of the Chancellor and the whole House. This being reported, the Peers resolved to starve them out; an order was made that the doors should not be opened till they had raised their siege. These Amazons now showed themselves qualified for the duty even of foot soldiers; they stood there till five in the afternoon, without either sustenance or evacuation, every now and then playing volleys of thumps, kicks, and raps against the door, with so much violence that the speakers in the House were scarce heard. When the Lords were not to be conquered by this, the two duchesses (very well apprised of the use of stratagems in war) commanded a dead silence of half an hour; and the Chancellor, who thought this a certain proof of their absence (the Commons also being very impatient to enter), gave order for the opening of the door; upon which they all rushed in, pushed aside their competitors, and placed themselves in the front rows of the gallery. They stayed there till after eleven, when the House rose; and during the debate

¹ Lady Huntingdon, the same who afterwards became the head, the Countess Matilda, of the Whitfieldian Methodists.—W.

gave applause, and showed marks of dislike, not only by smiles and winks (which have always been allowed in these cases), but by noisy laughs and apparent contempts; which is supposed the true reason why poor Lord Hervey spoke miserably.¹ I beg your pardon, dear madam, for this long relation; but 'tis impossible to be short on so copious a subject; and you must own this action very well worthy of record, and I think not to be paralleled in history, ancient or modern. I look so little in my own eyes (who was at that time ingloriously sitting over a tea-table), I hardly dare subscribe myself even,

Yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

May 2, O.S., 1739.

It is with great pleasure, dear madam, that I hear from you, after a silence that appeared very long to me. Nothing can be more agreeable or more obliging than your letter. I can give you no greater proof of the impression it made on me than letting you know that you have given me so great an inclination to see Italy once more, that I have serious thoughts

¹ The debate referred to was on the conduct of the Spanish government, and took place on Thursday, March 1, 1739. Mrs. Pendarves, afterwards Mrs. Delany, gives the following account of the matter: "Lady Westmoreland and the Duchess of Queensberry, Mrs. Fortescue and myself, set forward for Westminster, and got up to the gallery door without any difficulty. There were thirteen ladies more that came with the same intention. To tell you all the particulars of our provocations, the insults of the doorkeepers and our unshaken intrepidity, would flourish out more paper than a single frank would contain; but we bore the buffets of a stinking crowd from half an hour after ten till five in the afternoon without moving an inch from our places, only see-sawing about as the motion of the multitude forced us. At last, our committee resolved to adjourn to the coffee-house of the Court of Request, where debates began how we were to proceed? It was agreed amongst us to address Sir Charles Dalton [gentleman usher of the Black Rod] for admittance. The address was presented, and an answer returned that 'whilst one lady remained in the passage to the gallery the door should not be opened for the members of the House of Commons,' so we generously gave them the liberty of taking their places. As soon as the door was opened they all rushed in, and we followed. The Duke of Argyle spoke soon after we came in, but before that my Lord Cholmondeley moved that an address of thanks should be sent to the king for the convention. The minority opposed it gallantly. My Lord Chesterfield spoke most exquisitely well. Everything after him was dull and heavy; much *circumfloribus* stuff was talked of on the court side. They might have spared their breath. Their convincing argument was in their pockets, not on their tongues. They had a majority of twenty-one, and though they seemingly conquered, they made a poor figure."—*Autobiog. and Corres. of Mrs. Delany*, ii. 44.—T.

of setting out the latter end of this summer. And what the remembrance of all the charms of music, sculpture, painting, architecture, and even the sun itself could not do, the knowledge that Lady Pomfret is there has effected ;¹ and I already figure to myself the charms of the brightest conversation in the brightest climate. We have nothing here but clouds and perpetual rains, nor no news but deaths and sickness. Lord Halifax² died this morning, and I am really touched for the melancholy situation of his numerous family. A loss more peculiarly my own is that of poor Lady Stafford,³ whose last remains of life I am daily watching with a fruitless sorrow. believe a very few months, perhaps weeks, will part us for ever. You, who have a heart capable of friendship, may imagine to what a degree I am shocked at such a separation, which so much disorders my thoughts, as renders me unfit to entertain myself or any others. This reflection must shorten my letter. In you I hope to repair the loss of her, and when we meet, I am persuaded there will not be many regrets sent to England by, dear madam,

Your faithful and affectionate, &c.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.⁴

Dartford [25th July, 1739].

I STAYED an hour with the Duchess of Montague, and am arrived here at twelve o'clock, less fatigued than I expected. I should be very glad to hear you are well ; if you write to me to be left at the post-house at Dover, I suppose I may have your letter before I leave that place.

¹ Lady Pomfret had not left France at the date of this letter. She was at Marseilles, on her way to Italy, on the 28th May.—T.

² Made Earl of Halifax by a fresh creation after the death of his uncle Charles, who had been a minister under King William and George I., and whose barony, given by the former, was already settled upon him. Both became extinct upon his son's dying without male issue.—W.

³ Already referred to. She died at her house in Sackville-street, Piccadilly, on the 14th May, and was buried in St. James's church.—T.

⁴ The letters of Lady Mary to her husband during her long residence abroad, are, with scarcely one exception, indorsed by the latter with the day when received, and with the date of his answer, which generally follows within a few days. This letter is indorsed "A^d 26." Except where stated to the contrary, the letters to Mr. Wortley Montagu and the Countess of Bute in this section are now printed from the originals among the Wortley papers.—T.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

July 26 [1739].

I AM safely arrived at Dover, without any accident, and have borne the journey very well. I have followed your direction in sending for Mr. Hall,¹ who has been very civil. By his advice I have hired a boat for five guineas, otherwise I must have gone in the night, which he counselled me not to do. The wind is fair, and I hope to be in Calais to-morrow. I cannot say I am well, but I think not worse for my journey.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Calais] July 27 [1739].

I AM safely arrived at Calais, and found myself better on ship-board than I have been these six months; not in the least sick, though we had a very high sea, as you may imagine, since we came over in two hours and three-quarters. My servants behaved very well; and Mary not in the least afraid, but said she would be drowned very willingly with my ladyship. They ask me here extravagant prices for chaises, of which there is a great choice, both French and Italian: I have at last bought one for fourteen guineas, of a man whom Mr. Hall recommended to me. My things have been examined and sealed at the custom-house: they took from me a pound of snuff, but did not open my jewel-boxes, which they let pass on my word, being things belonging to my dress. I set out early to-morrow. I am very impatient to hear from you: I could not stay for the post at Dover for fear of losing the tide. I beg you would be so good to order Mr. Kent² to pack up my side-saddle, and all the tackling belonging to it, in a box, to be sent with my other things: if (as I hope) I recover my health abroad so much as to ride, I can get none I shall like so well.

¹ There are letters from this gentleman, who signs "Richard Halls," among the Wortley papers. He probably held some official appointment—perhaps in the Custom-house at Dover.—T.

² Thomas Kent. He appears to have been a secretary of Mr. Wortley Montagu.—T.

FROM MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.¹

Aug. 13, 1739.

I SUPPOSE you was advised at Boulogne² to go through Laon, but I should be glad to know whether you took that road as the best to Dijon, or only to avoid Paris; also whether you went by Cambray; and where you left the Paris road. If you mention a few of the great towns you have passed, I shall see the whole journey. As you had cold rains, I am at a loss to guess, whether the fires were occasioned by the fault of the weather or of your chaise. I wish (if it be easy) you would be exact and clear in your facts, because I shall lay by carefully what you write of your travels. I suppose the difficult part is over, and that from Dijon you might, if you pleased, go in an open boat to any of the places you seem to like, with as much safety as you could travel on the Thames; but I am persuaded you will find easy journeys by land more healthy and pleasant.—The other letter that comes to you this post, was kept back by T. K.'s [Kent's] mistake. I choose not to open it to write what is in this, as I have not yet added much paper to your baggage.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Dijon, Aug. 18, N.S. [1739].³

I AM at length arrived here very safely, and without any bad accident; and so much mended in my health, that I am surprised at it. France is so much improved, it is not to be known to be the same country we passed through twenty years ago. Everything I see speaks in praise of Cardinal Fleury; the roads are all mended, and the greatest part of them paved as well as the streets of Paris, planted on both sides like the roads in Holland; and such good care taken against robbers,

¹ The letters from Mr. Wortley Montagu in this section are mostly printed from draughts in his handwriting.—T.

² Mr. Halls, in a letter from Dover, of 28th July, says: "Her ladyship intending to stay two or three days at Boulogne, she desires me to send those letters after her."—T.

³ The Gregorian Calendar was at this time adopted in most Catholic countries on the Continent, and Lady Mary accordingly generally dates these letters according to the new style, which was eleven days later than the old style in use in England. Several of her letters, however, still observe the old style, which leads to some apparent confusion.—T.

that you may cross the country with your purse in your hand: but as to travelling *incognito*, I may as well walk *incognito* in the Pall-Mall. There is not any town in France where there is not English, Scotch, or Irish families established; and I have met with people that have seen me (though often such as I do not remember to have seen) in every town I have passed through; and I think the farther I go, the more acquaintance I meet. Here are in this town no less than sixteen English families of fashion. Lord Mansel lodges in the house with me, and a daughter of Lord Bathurst's, Mrs. Whichcote, [Mrs. Whitshed]¹ is in the same street. The Duke of Rutland is gone from hence some time ago, which Lady Peterborough told me at St. Omer's; which was one reason determined me to come here, thinking to be quiet; but I find it is impossible, and that will make me leave the place, after the return of this post. The French are more changed than their roads; instead of pale, yellow faces, wrapped up in blankets, as we saw them, the villages are all filled with fresh-coloured lusty peasants, in good cloth and clean linen. In is incredible the air of plenty and content that is over the whole country. I hope to hear, as soon as possible, that you are in good health.

FROM MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Aug. 16, 1739.

THOUGH you are surprised, I am not at all, that your health is so much mended. I have hitherto found travelling a never failing remedy for every disorder of the head or stomach. They are occasioned by a settlement of humours, which are removed by exercise, and carried off in * * or perspiration. I have not yet had the benefit of a journey into the North, but I hope I shall in a fortnight or three weeks. All things here are just as you left them, except the weather, which has been warmest in August. The showers and clouds have been as frequent as they were in Cæsar's time, and will, I fear, continue so till the sun or the globe has undergone some great change.

¹ The wife of James Whitshed, Esq., some time M.P. for Cirencester.—T.

I answer yours of the 18th to-day, though it came but yesterday, because you write you will stay at Dijon till the return of the post.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Turin, Sept. 10 [O.S., 1739].

I AM now, thank God, happily past the Alps. I believe I wrote to you, that I had met English of my acquaintance in every town in France. This fortune continued to the last; for at Pont Beauvoisin I met Lord Carlisle,¹ who was in the inn when I arrived, and immediately came to offer me his room, his cook to dress my supper (he himself having supped before I came in), and all sort of civility. We passed the evening together, and had a great deal of discourse. He said he liked Rome so well, that he should not have left it so soon, but on the account of Lord Morpeth, who was so ill there, that he was not yet recovered, and now carried in a litter. His distemper has been the bloody flux, which returned upon him in the mountains with so much violence, they had been kept three weeks at a miserable village; he is still so weak I did not see him. My Lord Carlisle told me that next to Rome the best place to stay in Italy is, without contradiction, Venice: that the impertinence of the little sovereigns in other countries is intolerable. I have no objection to his advice, but the fear of the air not agreeing with me, though my journey has now so far established my health, that I have lost all my bad symptoms, and am ready to think I could even bear the damps of London. I will therefore venture to try, and if I find Venice too cold or moist (which I am more afraid of), I can remove very easily; though I resolve against Rome, on an account you may guess. My Lord Carlisle said, he thought me in the right; that it is very hard to avoid meeting a certain person;² and there are so many little dirty spies that write any lie comes into their heads, that the doing

¹ The brother of Lady Mary's early friends "the young ladies at Castle Howard."
—T.

² The Pretender.—T.

it may be dangerous. I have received a letter from Lady Pomfret, that she is leaving Sienna, and intends for Venice, which is another inducement to me to go there; but the chief is the hope of living as quiet and as private as I please, which hitherto I have found impossible. The English resident here, Mr. Villette, came to wait on me the very night of my arrival, to my great surprise. I found the intelligence came from the King of Sardinia's officers, who were at Pont Voisin, and had learnt my name from Lord Carlisle's servants. I have been obliged to excuse my going to court, on [*sic*] having no court-dress, and saying I intended to leave the town in a few days. However, I have not been able to avoid the visits that have been made to me.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Turin, September 11, N.S., 1739.

I AM now, dear madam, in a country where I may soon hope for the pleasure of seeing you; but in taking your advice I see I have taken the wrong road to have that happiness soon; and I am out of patience to find that, after passing the Alps, we have the Apennines between us; besides the new-invented difficulties of passing from this country to Bologna, occasioned by their foolish quarantines. I will not entertain you with my road adventures till we meet. But I cannot help mentioning the most agreeable of them, which was seeing at Lyons the most beautiful and the best-behaved young man I ever saw. I am sure your ladyship must know I mean my Lord Lempster.¹ He did me the honour of coming to visit me several times; accompanied me to the opera; and, in short, I am indebted to him for many civilities, besides the pleasure of seeing so amiable a figure. If I had the honour of all my relations much at heart, I should, however, have been mortified at seeing his contrast in the person of my cousin Lord Fielding,² who is at the same academy. I

¹ Son of Lady Pomfret.—W.

² Basil, afterwards sixth Earl of Denbigh, born January 3, 1719.—T.

met Lord Carlisle at Pont Beauvoisin, who had been confined in the mountains three weeks in a miserable village, on the account of his son's health, who is still so ill that he can travel in no way but in a litter. I inquired after your ladyship, as I cannot help doing so of everybody that I think may have seen you. He told me that he had not had that advantage, but he was informed that you intended leaving Sienna, and would certainly pass the carnival at Venice; which determines me to go thither, where I beg you would direct your next letter, enclosed to Mr. Brown, the English consul there.

It is impossible to express to you the satisfaction I feel in the hopes of passing our time together, remote from the nonsense of our own country, and present to the only happiness this world can afford, a mutual friendship and esteem; which I flatter myself your partiality gives me, and which is paid to you with the utmost justice by, dear madam,

Your faithful, &c. &c.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Venice, Sept. 25 [1739].

I AM at length happily arrived here, I thank God: I wish it had been my original plan, which would have saved me some money and fatigue; though I have not much reason to regret the last, since I am convinced it has greatly contributed to the restoration of my health. I met nothing disagreeable in my journey but too much company. I find (contrary to the rest of the world) I did not think myself so considerable as I am; for I verily believe, if one of the pyramids of Egypt had travelled, it could not have been more followed; and if I had received all the visits that have been intended me, I should have stopped at least a year in every town I came through. I liked Milan so well, that if I had not desired all my letters to be directed hither, I think I should have been tempted to stay there. One of the pleasures I found there was the Borromean library, where all strangers have free access; and not only so, but liberty, on giving a note for it, to take any printed book home with them. I saw several curious manuscripts there;

and, as a proof of my recovery, I went up to the very top of the dome of the great church without any assistance. I am now in a lodging on the Great Canal. Lady Pomfret is not yet arrived, but I expect her very soon ; and if the air does not disagree with me, I intend seeing the carnival here. I hope your health continues, and that I shall hear from you very soon.

I think I have been a very good housewife to come thus far on the money I carried out with me ; but you may be sure I am very near the end of it, and I desire you would send me a bill of exchange enclosed in your next letter, directed to be left at the consul, Mr. Brown's, at Venice. He is the only person I have seen here : he tells me our old friend Grimani¹ is procurator of St. Marc, and will come to see me as soon as he hears of my arrival.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Venice, Oct. 10, N.S. [1739].

I DID not answer dear Lady Pomfret's letter the moment I had received it, from a very ridiculous reason, which was, however, a very serious impediment ; a gnat had saluted one of my eyes so roughly, that it was for two days absolutely sealed down : it is now quite well ; and the first use I make of it is to give thanks for your kind thoughts of me, which I wish I knew how to deserve.

I like this place extremely, and am of opinion you would do so too : as to cheapness, I think 'tis impossible to find any part of Europe where both the laws and customs are so contrived purposely to avoid expenses of all sorts ; and here is a universal liberty that is certainly one of the greatest *agrémens* in life. We have foreign ambassadors from all parts of the world, who have all visited me. I have received visits from many of the noble Venetian ladies ; and upon the whole I am very

¹ Afterwards Doge of Venice. Chiefly by his prudence the republic of Venice preserved its neutrality throughout the long period of the wars for the Austrian succession in which all the surrounding states were involved. It was this immunity from the horrors of war which subsequently induced Lady Mary to take up her abode within the Venetian states.—T.

much at my ease here. If I was writing to Lady Sophia, I would tell her of the comedies and operas which are every night, at very low prices; but I believe even you will agree with me that they are ordered to be as convenient as possible, every mortal going in a mask, and consequently no trouble in dressing, or forms of any kind. I should be very glad to see Rome, which was my first intention (I mean next to seeing yourself); but am deterred from it by reasons that are put into my head by all sorts of people that speak to me of it. There are innumerable little dirty spies about all English; and I have so often had the ill-fortune to have false witness borne against me, I fear my star on this occasion. I still hope you will come to Venice; where you will see a great town, very different from any other you ever saw, and a manner of living that will be quite new to you. Let me endeavour to tempt you by naming another motive; you will find a sincere friend, who will try the utmost of her power to render the place agreeable to you; it can never be thoroughly so to me till I have the happiness of seeing Lady Pomfret; being ever, in the strictest sense of that phrase,

Yours, &c.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Venice, October 14 [1739].

I FIND myself very well here. I am visited by the most considerable people of the town, and all the foreign ministers, who have most of them made great entertainments for me. I dined yesterday at the Spanish ambassador's, who even surpassed the French in magnificence. He met me at the hall-door, and the lady at the stair-head, to conduct me through the long apartment; in short, they could not have shown me more honours, if I had been an ambassadress. She desired me to think myself *patrona del casa*, and offered me all the services in her power, to wait on me where I pleased, &c. They have the finest palace in Venice. What is very convenient, I hear it is not at all expected I should make any dinners, it not being the fashion for anybody to do it here but

the foreign ministers ; and I find I can live here very genteelly on my allowance. I have already a very agreeable general acquaintance ; though when I came, here was no one I had ever seen in my life, but the Cavaliere Grimani and the Abbé Conti. I must do them [the] justice to say they have taken pains to be obliging to me. The Procurator brought his niece (who is at the head of his family) to wait on me ; and they invited me to reside with them at their palace on the Brent, but I did not think it proper to accept of it. He also introduced to me the Signora Pisani Mocenigo, who is the most considerable lady here. The Nuncio is particularly civil to me ; he has been several times to see me, and has offered me the use of his box at the opera. I have many others at my service, and, in short, it is impossible for a stranger to be better received than I am. Here are no English, except a Mr. Bertie and his governor, who arrived two days ago, and who intends but a short stay.

I hope you are in good health, and that I shall hear of it before you can receive this letter.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Venice, Nov. 6 [1739.]

It was with the greatest pleasure I read dear Lady Pomfret's letter half an hour ago : I cannot too soon give thanks for the delightful hopes you give me of seeing you here ; and, to say truth, my gratitude is even painful to me till I try to express some part of it.

Upon my word, I have spoken my real thoughts in relation to Venice ; but I will be more particular in my description, lest you should find the same reason of complaint you have hitherto experienced. It is impossible to give any rule for the agreeableness of conversation ; but here is so great a variety, I think 'tis impossible not to find some to suit every taste. Here are foreign ministers from all parts of the world, who, as they have no court to employ their hours, are overjoyed to enter into commerce with any stranger of distinction. As I am the only lady here at present, I can assure you I am

courted, as if I was the only one in the world. As to all the conveniences of life, they are to be had at very easy rates; and for those that love public places, here are two playhouses and two operas constantly performed every night, at exceeding low prices. But you will have no reason to examine that article, no more than myself; all the ambassadors having boxes appointed them; and I have every one of their keys at my service, not only for my own person, but whoever I please to carry or send. I do not make much use of this privilege, to their great astonishment. It is the fashion for the greatest ladies to walk the streets, which are admirably paved; and a mask, price sixpence, with a little cloak, and the head of a domino, the genteel dress to carry you everywhere.¹ The greatest equipage is a gondola, that holds eight persons, and is the price of an English chair. And it is so much the established fashion for everybody to live their own way, that nothing is more ridiculous than censuring the actions of another. This would be terrible in London, where we have little other diversion; but for me, who never found any pleasure in malice, I bless my destiny that has conducted me to a part where people are better employed than in talking of the affairs of their acquaintance. It is at present excessive cold (which is the only thing I have to find fault with); but in recompense we have a clear bright sun, and fogs and factions things unheard of in this climate. In short, if you come, and like the way of living as well as I do, there can be nothing to be added to the happiness of, dearest madam,

Your faithful, &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Venice [Nov. or Dec., 1739.]

YOU have put me to a very difficult choice, yet, when I

¹ Mr. Dallaway says: "The English travellers at Venice who, she presumed, might have been induced to visit her from curiosity, she received in a mask and domino, as her dress of ceremony." Much speculation has been indulged in by the critics on this statement, and Lord Wharnccliffe remarks, that the authority upon which Mr. Dallaway relied, cannot now be traced. This passage, however, showing that the mask and domino were the common fashion "to carry you everywhere," deprives the story of its mystery—if the passage in the text were not, indeed, the sole foundation of Dallaway's story.—T.

consider we are both in Italy, and yet do not see one another, I am astonished at the capriciousness of my fortune. My affairs are so uncertain, I can answer for nothing that is future. I have taken some pains to put the inclination for travelling into Mr. Wortley's head, and was so much afraid he would change his mind, that I hastened before him in order (at least) to secure my journey. He proposed following me in six weeks, his business requiring his presence at Newcastle.¹ Since that, the change of scene that has happened in England² has made his friends persuade him to attend parliament this session: so that what his inclinations, which must govern mine, will be next spring, I cannot absolutely foresee. For my own part, I like my own situation so well that it will be a displeasure to me to change it. To postpone such a conversation as yours a whole twelvemonth is a terrible appearance; on the other hand, I would not follow the example of the first of our sex, and sacrifice for a present pleasure a more lasting happiness. In short, I can determine nothing on this subject. When you are at Florence, we may debate it over again.—I had letters last post from England that informed me we lodged in a house together. I think it is the first lie I ever heard invented that I wished a solemn truth.

The Prince of Saxony is expected here in a few days, and has taken a palace exactly over against my house.³ As I had the honour to be particularly well acquainted (if one may use that phrase) with his mother when I was at Vienna, I believe I cannot be dispensed with from appearing at the conversations which I hear he intends to hold: which is some mortification to me, who am wrapt up among my books with antiquarians and virtuosi. I shall be very impatient for the return to this letter; hoping to hear something more determined of your resolutions; which will in a great measure form those of, dear madam,

Your ladyship's most faithful, &c.

¹ This is corroborated by her husband's letter of 16th Aug., 1739, in which he speaks of making his journey into the north "in a fortnight or three weeks."—T.

² Alluding probably to the declaration of war with Spain.—T.

³ The date must have been before Dec. 25, the date of another letter (*post*, p. 53), from which the Prince of Saxony appears to have been arrived some time.—T.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Venice, Dec. 11 [1739].

It was with great pleasure I received your letter half an hour ago, having not heard anything so long. I am as agreeably here as any stranger in my circumstances can possibly be; and, indeed, a repetition of all the civilities I have received would sound more like vanity than truth. I am sensible I owe a great part of them to Grimani, who is in the first esteem and authority in this republic; and, as he takes pains to appear my friend, his relations and allies, of both sexes (which are the most considerable people here), endeavour to oblige me in all sort of ways. The carnival is expected to be more brilliant than common, from the great concourse of noble strangers. The Princess of Holstein and the Prince of Wolfenbittel (nephew to the Empress) are already arrived, and the Electoral Prince of Saxony expected next week. If my age and humour permitted me much pleasure in public amusements, here are a great variety of them. I take as little share of them as I can.

“Frui paratis et valido mihi
 Latœe dones, et precor integrâ
 Cum mente, nec turpem senectam
 Degere, nec citharâ carentem.”

[HOR. *Od.*, lib. i. ode 31.]

You see I have got a Horace, which is borrowed of the consul, who is a good scholar; but I am very impatient for my own books.

Here is enclosed Mr. Child's note for my dressing plate, which I forgot to leave with you.

You do not seem desirous to hear news, which makes me not trouble you with any.

I could wish, when you send my things, you would be so good to send me the covers of the cushions that were used at Constantinople; the additional weight to the baggage will be very small. I do not think they can be of any service to you, and they would be useful to me, being in fashion here. They were put into the box that was left open where the furniture of my dressing-room was put.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Venice] Dec. 25, O.S. [1739].

I RECEIVED yours yesterday dated Dec. 7. I find my health very well here, notwithstanding the cold, which is very sharp, but the sun shines as clear as at midsummer. I am treated here with more distinction than I could possibly expect. I went to see the ceremony of high mass celebrated by the Doge, on Christmas-eve. He appointed a gallery for me and the Prince of Wolfenbittel, where no other person was admitted but those of our company. A greater compliment could not have been paid me if I had been a sovereign princess. The Doge's niece (he having no lady) met me at the palace gate, and led me through the palace to the church of St. Mark, where the ceremony was performed in the pomp you know, and we were not obliged to any act of adoration. The Electoral Prince of Saxony is here in public, and makes a prodigious expense. His governor is Count Wackerbart, son to that Madame Wackerbart with whom I was so intimate at Vienna; on which account he shows me particular civilities, and obliges his pupil to do the same. I was last night at an entertainment made for him by the Signora Pisani Mocenigo, which was one of the finest I ever saw, and he desired me to sit next to him in a great chair: in short, I have all the reason that can be to be satisfied with my treatment in this town; and I am glad I met Lord Carlisle, who directed me hither.

I have received Sir F. Ch. [Child's] bill dated Oct. 11, which I certified to him some time ago. I have not yet had any for the Christmas quarter.

I have so little correspondence at London, I should be pleased to hear from you whatever happens among my acquaintance. I am sorry for Mr. Pelham's misfortune;¹ though 'tis long since that I have looked upon the hopes of continuing a family as one of the vainest of mortal prospects.

"Tho' Solomon, with a thousand wives,
To get a wise successor strives,
But one, and he a fool, survives."

The Procurator of St. Mark has desired his compliments to you whenever I write.

¹ The death of his two sons on two following days, Nov. 27, 28, 1739.—D.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Venice] Jan. 25 [1740].

I WROTE to you last post ; but as I do not know whether I was particular enough in answering all the questions you asked me, I add the following account, which I do not wonder will surprise you, since both the Procurator Grimani and the Abbé Conti tell me often that these last twenty years have so far changed the customs of Venice, that they hardly know it for the same country. Here are several foreign ladies of quality, I mean Germans, and from other parts of Italy ; here not being one Frenchwoman. They are all well received by the gentil donnas, who make a vanity in introducing them to the assemblies and other public diversions, though all those ladies, as well as myself, go frequently to the Princess of Campo Florida's (the Spanish ambassadress) assembly. She is in a very particular manner obliging to me, and is, I really think, one of the best sort of women I ever knew. The Neapolitan (though he has been here some months) makes his public entry to-day, which I am to go [to] see about an hour hence. He gives a great entertainment at night, where all the noble Venetians of both sexes will be in masque. I am engaged to go with Signora Justiniani Gradinego, who is one of the first ladies here. The Prince of Saxony has invited me to come into his box at the opera ; but I have not yet accepted of it, he having always the four ladies with him that are wives to the four senators deputed to do the honours of Venice ; and I am afraid they should think I interfere with them in the honour of his conversation, which they are very fond of, and have behaved very coldly to some other noble Venetian ladies that have taken the liberty of his box. I will be directed in this (as I am in all public matters) by the Procurator Grimani. My letter is shortened by the arrival of the signora.

I have received my Christmas quarter, for which I thank you.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[Venice, about Feb. 17, 1740.]

I MUST begin my letter, dear madam, with asking pardon for the peevishness of my last. I confess I was piqued at yours, and you should not wonder I am a little tender on that point. To suspect me of want of desire to see you, is accusing at once both my taste and my sincerity; and you will allow that all the world are sensible upon these subjects. But you have now given me an occasion to thank you, in sending me the most agreeable young man I have seen in my travels. I wish it was in my power to be of use to him; but what little services I am able to do him, I shall not fail of performing with great pleasure. I have already received a very considerable one from him in a conversation where you was the subject, and I had the satisfaction of hearing him talk of you in a manner that agreed with my own way of thinking. I wish I could tell you that I set out for Florence next week; but the winter is yet so severe, and by all report, even that of our friends, the roads so bad, it is impossible to think of it. We are now in the midst of carnival amusements, which are more than usual, for the entertainment of the Electoral Prince of Saxony, and I am obliged to live in a hurry very inconsistent with philosophy, and extreme¹ different from the life I projected to lead. But 'tis long since I have been of Prior's opinion, who, I think, somewhere compares us to cards, who are but played with, do not play. At least such has been my destiny from my youth upwards; and neither Dr. Clarke or Lady Sundon² could ever convince me that I was a free agent; for I have always been disposed of more by little accidents, than either my own inclinations or interest. I believe that affairs of the greatest importance are carried the same way. I seriously assure you (as I have done before) I wish

¹ "Extreme" for the adverb was in common use in colloquial writing of the time.—T.

² This alludes to Queen Caroline and her confidante, who dabbled in philosophy and metaphysics, and were at one time very fond of Dr. Clarke, with whom they affected to study. Pope's line may be remembered:

"Nor in a hermitage set Dr. Clarke."—W.

nothing more than your conversation ; and am downright enraged that I can appoint no time for that happiness ; which, however, I hope will not be long delayed, and is impatiently waited for by, dear madam,

Your ladyship's, &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[Venice, about Feb., 1740.]

I CANNOT deny your ladyship's letter gave me a great deal of pleasure ; but you have seasoned it with a great deal of pain, in the conclusion (after the many agreeable things you have said to me) that you are not entirely satisfied with me : you will not throw our separation on ill fortune ; and I will not renew the conversation of the fallen angels in Milton, who in contesting on predestination and free will, we are told,

“ They of the vain dispute could know no end.”

Yet I know that neither my pleasures, my passions, nor my interests, have ever disposed of me, so much as little accidents, which, whether from chance or destiny, have always determined my choice. Here is weather, for example, which, to the shame of all almanacks, keeps on the depth of winter in the beginning of spring ; and makes it as much impossible for me to pass the mountains of Bologna, as it would be to wait on you in another planet, if you had taken up your residence in Venus or Mercury. However, I am fully determined to give myself that happiness ; but when is out of my power to decide. You may imagine, apart from the gratitude I owe you and the inclination I feel for you, that I am impatient to hear good sense pronounced in my native tongue ; having only heard my language out of the mouths of boys and governors¹ for these five months. Here are inundations of them broke in upon us this carnival, and my apartment must be their refuge ; the greater part of them having kept an in-

¹ The term Governor, as applied to tutors who accompanied young nobles and gentlemen on their travels, is now almost forgotten. Horace Walpole was one of these “ boys” at this time travelling in Italy with Gray the poet. Lady Mary met him at Florence.—T.

violable fidelity to the languages their nurses taught them; their whole business abroad (as far as I can perceive) being to buy new clothes, in which they shine in some obscure coffee-house, where they are sure of meeting only one another; and after the important conquest of some waiting gentlewoman of an opera queen, whom perhaps they remember as long as they live, return to England excellent judges of men and manners. I find the spirit of patriotism so strong in me every time I see them, that I look on them as the greatest blockheads in nature; and, to say truth, the compound of booby and *petit maître* makes up a very odd sort of animal. I hope we shall live to talk all these things over, and ten thousand more, which I reserve till the hour of meeting; which that it may soon arrive is the zealous wish of

Your ever faithful, &c. &c.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Venice] March 29 [1740].

I SEND you the enclosed, which came to me the last post, to show you that my bill of credit is of no further use to me, and if you think it proper I should have one, Mr. Child should send me one on his correspondent here, though I do not foresee any occasion I shall have for it. I think Mr. Waters seems dissatisfied with my letters being directed to him. Those he mentions were from my son, pretty much in the usual style; he desires to leave the town where he now is, because he says there is no temptation to riot, and he would show how able he is to resist it: I answer him this post, and shall endeavour mildly to show him the necessity of being easy in his present situation.

Lord Granby¹ leaves this place to-morrow, to set out for Constantinople; the Prince of Saxony stays till the second of May; in the mean time there are entertainments given him almost every day of one sort or other, and a regatta preparing, which is expected by all strangers with great impatience. He

¹ John Marquis of Granby, afterwards commander-in-chief of the British army in Germany, born January 2, 1721.—T.

went to see the arsenal three days ago, waited on by a numerous nobility of both sexes; the Bucentaur was adorned and launched, a magnificent collation given, and we sailed a little way in it: I was in company with the Signora Justiniani Gradinego, and Signora Marina Crizzo. As you have been at Venice, there is no occasion of describing those things to you. There were two cannons founded in his presence, and a galley built and launched in an hour's time. Last night there was a concert of voices and instruments at the Hospital of the Incurabili, where there were two girls that, in the opinion of all people, excel either Faustina or Cuzzoni,¹ but you know they are never permitted to sing on any theatre.

Lord Fitzwilliam is expected in this town to-night, on his return to England, as I am told. The prince's behaviour is very obliging to all, and in no part of it liable to censure, though I think there is nothing to be said in praise of his genius; I suppose you know he has been lame from his birth, and is carried about in a chair, though a beautiful person from the waist upwards: it is said his family design him for the Church, he having four brothers who are fine children. The weather is now very fine; we have had none of the canals frozen, in the coldest part of the winter, but the mountains are still covered with snow.

Your last letters have said nothing of my baggage. If there is danger of its being taken by the privateers, I had rather it stayed in England, and I would go into the southern part of

¹ Two celebrated Italian singers of the opera in London. Cuzzoni afterwards married Signor Sandoni, and was tried and condemned to death for poisoning her husband, but the punishment was remitted. She was famed for her extravagance. When her popularity declined and her voice failed, she was seen, it is said, selling greens in the streets of Bologna. The rivalries of these two singers long divided the town into parties, and gave rise to numberless squibs and epigrams. Lady Mary's acquaintance, Miss Howe, afterwards Countess of Pembroke, was accused of "catcalling" Faustina. A poem called "Faustina, or the Roman Songstress; or, the Luxury and Effeminacy of the Age," published in 1726, when these feuds were at their height, bears the following motto:

"Cuzzoni can no longer charm,
Faustina now does all alarm,
And we must buy her pipe so clear
With hundreds twenty-five a year;
Either we've money over plenty,
Or else our skulls are wondrous empty."—T.

France, where it might be conveyed to me without hazard, than risk the loss of it.—If there is a probability of a rupture with France, I can go to Avignon.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Venice] April 19, N.S. [1740].

I RECEIVED yours of January 1 but yesterday; for which reason I think it useless to answer it at present, but if I find any occasion, shall not fail to follow your orders. Lord Granby is set out on his journey for Constantinople. Lord Fitzwilliam arrived here three days ago; he came to see me the next day, as all the English do, who are much surprised at the civilities and familiarity with which I am with [*sic*] the noble ladies. Everybody tells me 'tis what never was done but to myself; and I own I have a little vanity in it, because the French ambassador told me when I first came, that though the Procurator Grimani might persuade them to visit me, he defied me to enter into any sort of intimacy with them: instead of which they call me out almost every day on some diversion or other, and are desirous to have me in all their parties of pleasure. I am invited to-morrow to the Foscari to dinner, which is to be followed by a concert and a ball, where I shall be the only stranger, though here are at present a great number come to see the regatta, which is fixed for the 29th of this month, N.S. I shall see it at the Procurator Grimani's, where there will be a great entertainment that day. My own house is very well situated to see it, being on the Grand Canal; but I would not refuse him and his niece, since they seem desirous of my company, and I shall oblige some other ladies with my windows. They are hired at a great rate to see the show. I suppose you know the nature of it, but if it will be any amusement I will send you a particular description.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[Venice, about April, 1740.]

UPON my word, dear madam, I seriously intend myself the

happiness of being with you this summer; but it cannot be till then; while the Prince of Saxony stays here I am engaged not to move: not upon his account, as you may very well imagine, but here are many entertainments given, and to be given him by the public, which it would be disobliging to my friends here to run away from; and I have received so many civilities from the first people here, I cannot refuse them the complaisance of passing the feast of the Ascension in their company, though 'tis a real violence to my inclination to be so long deprived of yours, of which I know the value, and may say, that I am just to you from judgment as well as pleased with you from taste. I envy nothing more to Lady Walpole¹ than your conversation, though I am glad you have met with hers. Have you not reasoned much on the surprising conclusion of Lord Scarborough? I confess I look upon his engagement with the duchess,² not as the cause, but sign, that he was mad. I could wish for some authentic account of her behaviour on

¹ Lady Walpole was then at Florence. See note on letter, *post*, p. 82.—T.

² Isabella, the widow of William Duke of Manchester, was eldest daughter of John Duke of Montagu, by his wife, Lady Mary Churchill, daughter of John the great Duke of Marlborough, a woman celebrated for her beauty, and the admiration which it excited. She was about to take as her second husband Richard Earl of Scarborough (the Lord Scarborough so praised by Chesterfield and Pope), when, without any apparent reason to be tired of life, he destroyed himself the day before that fixed for their marriage. Report said, that by hastily drying up an issue, or using hazardous means to check an eruption, he had repelled a humour, which flew to his brain, and produced a sudden fit of insanity. Lady Mary Wortley's remarks on this, and everything else concerning the Duchess of Manchester, are so far from charitable, that the cause of her bitterness should be explained. The duchess unfortunately was at variance, indeed at open war, with her parents, having married very young, and in the first enjoyment of delightful freedom, made too much haste to fling off the yoke of her mother, who, perhaps, on her side, strove to govern rather too long. But this Lady Mary, who was her mother the Duchess of Montagu's fast friend, would not admit, and threw the whole blame upon the daughter, for whom, however, the self-same circumstance won zealous protection and partiality from her august grandmother, Sarah of Marlborough. "You, my sweet duchess" (said the grandmother, in an overflow of fondness), "*you* were always the very best of God's creatures, but you have a *mother!*!" The granddaughter, who was gifted with a great deal of humour, and knew perfectly well what made her a favourite, could not resist answering, "Ay, and *she* has a mother!"

None of the Duchess of Manchester's lovers pursued her more ardently than at one time did Mr. Henry Fox, afterwards Lord Holland. So, whenever Duchess Sarah heard of any imprudent love-match, "Ah! well!" she would cry, "I don't care who runs away with whom so long as the Fox does not carry off my Goose."—W. The duchess's marriage to Mr. Hussey will be found subsequently alluded to.—T.

this occasion. I do not doubt she shines in it, as she has done in every other part of her life. I am almost inclined to superstition on this accident; and think it a judgment for the death of a poor silly soul,¹ that you know he caused some years ago.

I had a visit yesterday from a Greek called Cantacuzena, who had the honour to see your ladyship, as he says, often at Florence, and gave me the pleasure of speaking of you in the manner I think. Prince Beauveau and Lord Shrewsbury intend to leave us in a few days for the Conclave. We expect after it a fresh cargo of English; but, God be praised, I hear of no ladies among them: Mrs. Lethuillier was the last that gave comedies in this town, and she had made her exit before I came; which I look upon as a great blessing. I have nothing to complain of here but too much diversion, as it is called; and which literally diverts me from amusements much more agreeable. I can hardly believe it is me dressed up at balls, and stalking about at assemblies; and should not be so much surprised at suffering any of Ovid's transformations; having more disposition, as I thought, to harden into stone or timber, than to be enlivened into these tumultuary entertainments, where I am amazed to find myself seated by a sovereign prince, after travelling a thousand miles to establish myself in the bosom of a republic, with a design to lose all memory of kings and courts. Won't you admire the force of destiny? I remember my contracting an intimacy with a girl² in a village, as the most distant thing on earth from power and politics. Fortune tosses her up (in a double sense), and I am embroiled in a thousand affairs that I had resolved to avoid as long as I lived. Say what you please, madam, we

¹ This was Lady Mary's own sister-in-law, the widow Lady Kingston, who with a weak understanding had strong affections, and devoted them all to Lord Scarborough. She thought him so firmly engaged to her, that she even taught her children to call him *papa*. But falling ill, and sending for him, she received such a shock from a cold slighting answer he gave to something she said about their future marriage, that she turned on her pillow, and spoke to him no more. As she died a day or two afterwards, Lady Mary might justly accuse him of having struck the death-blow.—W.

² Meaning Miss Skerrett, with whom Lady Mary made an intimate acquaintance at Twickenham, some time before her conquest of Sir Robert Walpole "*tossed her up*" into the region of power and politics.—W.

are pushed about by a superior hand, and there is some predestination, as well as a great deal of free will, in my being

Faithfully yours, &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[Venice, about April, 1740.]

I CANNOT help being offended to find that you think it necessary to make an excuse for the desire that you so obligingly expressed of seeing me. Do not think me so tasteless or so ungrateful not to be sensible of all the goodness you have shown me. I prefer one hour of your conversation to all the raree-shows that have ever been exhibited. But little circumstances commonly overrule both our interests and our inclinations. Though I believe, if the weather and roads permitted, I should even now break through them all, to gratify myself with waiting on you : however, I hope that happiness in a few weeks ; and in the mean time must go through a course of conversations, concerts, balls, &c. I envy you a more reasonable way of passing your time. It is but a very small quantity that is allowed us by nature, and yet how much of that little is squandered. I am determined to be a better housewife for the future ; and not to be cheated out of so many irretrievable hours, that might be laid out to better advantage. I could pity the Duchess of Manchester, though I believe 'tis a sensation she is incapable of feeling for anybody, and I do not doubt it is her pride that is chiefly shocked on this occasion ; but as that is a very tender part, and she having always possessed a double portion of it, I am persuaded she is very miserable. I am surprised at the different way of acting I find in Italy, where, though the sun gives more warmth to the passions, they are all managed with a sort of discretion that there is never any public *éclat*, though there are ten thousand public engagements : which is so different from what I had always heard and read, that I am convinced either the manners of the country are wonderfully changed, or travellers have always related what they have imagined, and not what they saw ; as I found at Constantinople, where, instead of the

imprisonment in which I fancied all the ladies languished, I saw them running about in veils from morning to night.

Till I can see you, dear madam, let me hear from you as often as possible, and do not think your favours thrown away upon a stupid heart; it is sincerely devoted to your service, with as much attachment as ever. I can part with all other pretensions, but I must be angry if you are in this point unjust to

Your faithful servant, &c. &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Venice, May 17 [1740].

I HAD the happiness of a letter from your ladyship a few days since, and yesterday the pleasure of talking of you with Sir Henry Englefield.¹ He tells me you are still in ice and snow at Florence, and we are very little better at Venice, where we remain in the state of warming beds and sitting by firesides. I begin to be of opinion that the sun is grown old; it is certain he does not ogle with so much spirit as he used to do, or our planet has made some slip unperceived by the mathematicians. For my own part, who am more passionately fond of Phœbus than ever Clymene was, I have some thoughts of removing into Africa, that I may feel him once more before I die; which I shall do as surely as your olive-trees, if I have much longer to sigh for his absence. In the mean time I am tied here as long as the Prince of Saxony, which is an uncertain term, but I think will not be long after the Ascension;² and then I intend myself the pleasure of waiting on you, where I will listen to all your reproaches, hoping you will do the same to my excuses, and that the balance will come out in my favour: though I could wish you rather here; having a strong notion Venice is more agreeable than Florence, as freedom is more eligible than slavery; and I have an insuperable aversion to courts, or the shadows of them, be they in what shapes they will. I send you no description of

¹ Sir Henry Englefield, Bart., of Wotton-Basset. The baronetcy expired in 1822.—T.

² The Gregorian Calendar having been adopted in this part of Italy, Holy Thursday, in 1740, fell, I presume, on the 26th of May, N.S.—T.

the regatta, not doubting you have been wearied with the printed one. It was really a magnificent show, as ever was exhibited since the galley of Cleopatra. Instead of her majesty we had some hundreds of Cleopatras in the windows and balconies. The operas and masks begin next Wednesday, and we persevere in gallantries and raree-shows, in the midst of wars and rumours of wars that surround us. I may, however, assure you with an English plainness, these things can at most but attract my eyes, while (as the song says) you engage my heart; which I hope to convince you of when I am so happy as to tell you by word of mouth that I am

Sincerely and faithfully yours, &c.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Venice] June 1 [1740].

I WROTE you a long letter yesterday, which I sent by a private hand, who will see it safely delivered.¹ It is impossible to be better treated, I may even say more courted, than I am here. I am very glad of your good fortune at London. You may remember I have always told you that it is in your power to make the first figure in the House of Commons.² As to the bill, I perfectly remember the paying of it; which you may easily believe when you inquire, that all auction bills are paid at furthest within eight days after the sale: the date of this is March 1, and I did not leave London till July 25; and in that time have been at many other auctions, particularly Lord Halifax's, which was a short time before my journey. This is not the first of Cock's³ mistakes; he is famous for making them, which are (he says) the fault of his servants. You seem to mention the regatta in a manner as if you would be pleased with a description of it. It is a race of boats: they are accompanied by vessels which they call *Piotes*, and *Bichones*, that are built at the expense of the nobles and

¹ This letter does not appear.—T.

² This probably refers generally to the divisions known to exist among the ministers, and the signs of the approaching downfall of Sir Robert Walpole. It may, however, allude to some speech of Mr. Wortley Montagu's, of which no record has been preserved.—T.

³ A noted auctioneer in the great Piazza, Covent Garden.—T.

strangers that have a mind to display their magnificence; they are a sort of machines adorned with all that sculpture and gilding can do to make a shining appearance. Several of them cost one thousand pounds sterling, and I believe none less than five hundred; they are rowed by gondoliers dressed in rich habits, suitable to what they represent. There was enough of them to look like a little fleet, and I own I never saw a finer sight. It would be too long to describe every one in particular; I shall only name the principal:—the Signora Pisani Mocenigo's represented the Chariot of the Night, drawn by four sea-horses, and showing the rising of the moon, accompanied with stars, the statues on each side representing the hours to the number of twenty-four, rowed by gondoliers in rich liveries, which were changed three times, all of equal richness, and the decorations changed also to the dawn of Aurora and the mid-day sun, the statues being new dressed every time, the first in green, the second time red, and the last blue, all equally laced with silver, there being three races. Signor Soranzo represented the Kingdom of Poland, with all the provinces and rivers in that dominion, with a concert of the best instrumental music in rich Polish habits; the painting and gilding were exquisite in their kinds. Signor Contarini's piote showed the Liberal Arts; Apollo was seated on the stern upon Mount Parnassus, Pegasus behind, and the Muses seated round him: opposite was a figure representing Painting, with Fame blowing her trumpet; and on each side Sculpture and Music in their proper dresses. The Procurator Foscari's was the Chariot of Flora guided by Cupids, and adorned with all sorts of flowers, rose-trees, &c. Signor Julio Contarini[s] represented the Triumphs of Valour; Victory was on the stern, and all the ornaments warlike trophies of every kind. Signor Correr's was the Adriatic Sea receiving into her arms the Hope of Saxony. Signor Alvisio Mocenigo's was the Garden of Hesperides; the whole fable was represented by different statues. Signor Querini had the Chariot of Venus drawn by doves, so well done, they seemed ready to fly upon the water; the Loves and Graces attended her. Signor Paul

Doria had the Chariot of Diana, who appeared hunting in a large wood: the trees, hounds, stag, and nymphs, all done naturally: the gondoliers dressed like peasants attending the chase: and Endymion, lying under a large tree, gazing on the goddess. Signor Angelo Labbia represented Poland crowning of Saxony, waited on by the Virtues and subject Provinces. Signor Angelo Molino was Neptune waited on by the Rivers. Signor Vincenzo Morosini's piote showed the Triumphs of Peace: Discord being chained at her feet, and she surrounded with the Pleasures, &c.

I believe you are already weary of this description, which can give you but a very imperfect idea of the show; but I must say one word of the bichonis, which are less vessels, quite open, some representing gardens, others apartments, all the oars being gilt either with gold or silver, and the gondoliers' liveries either velvet or rich silk, with a profusion of lace, fringe, and embroidery. I saw this show at the Procurator Grimani's house, which was near the place where the prizes were delivered: there was a great assembly invited on the same occasion, which were all nobly entertained.¹

I can get no better ink here, though I have tried several times, and it is a great vexation to me to want it.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

June 4 [1740].

I HAVE this moment received the most agreeable and most obliging letter I ever read in my life; I mean your ladyship's of the 28th May. I ought to take post to-morrow morning to thank you in person, but the possibilities are wanting. Here is a new, unforeseen, impertinent impediment rose up; in vulgar English called a big belly. I hope you won't think it my own; but my dear chambermaid, the only English female belonging to me, was pleased to honour me last night with the confidence that she expects to lie in every day; which my

¹ A description of the same scene, derived from Lady Mary's account, will be found in the Correspondence of the Countess of Hertford and the Countess of Pomfret, 1806, second edition, ii. 19.—T.

negligence and her loose gown has hindered me from perceiving till now; though I have been told to-day by ten visitors that all the town knew it except myself. Here am I locked up this month at Venice for her sweet sake, and consequently going to hate it heartily; but it is not possible for me to travel alone, or trust an Italian with the care of my jewels, &c. The creature is married to an English servant of mine, so there is no indecency in keeping her, but a great deal of inconveniency. I beg your pardon, dear madam, for this ridiculous detail of my domestics, but it is at present the only thing that stops my journey; the Prince of Saxony's being fixed for the tenth of this month. You cannot know me so little as to suppose the pleasure of making my court determined me to stay as long as he did. I freely confess a very great esteem, and even friendship for his governor, whose civilities to me have been so great. I must have been very stupid, as well as ungrateful, if I could have thought they deserved no return; and he exacted this promise from me at a time when neither he nor I thought he could stay above half the time he has done. This friendship of ours is attended with such peculiar circumstances as make it as free from all possibility of a reproach, as a fancy your ladyship may take, for aught I know, to the Venus de Medici; he being in some sense as immovable as she, and equally incapable, by the duties of his cursed place, to leave the post he is in, even for one moment. I go there to visit him behind the prince's chair, which is his grate;¹ where we converse in English (which he speaks perfectly well), and he has the pleasure of talking to me with a freedom that he does not use to any other. You may easily imagine the consolation this is to him; and you have so good a heart, that I am sure you must be sensible of the pleasure I find in giving way to a man of so extraordinary a character both for virtue and understanding. This is the true history of my stay here, which shall be as short as these *remoras* will permit; being ever, &c.

¹ Lady Mary must have meant that the prince's chair was to his governor what the grate of a nunnery is to the nuns—an impassable barrier.—W.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[Venice, June, 1740.]

I SEND you this letter by so agreeable a companion,¹ that I think it a very considerable present. He will tell you that he has pressed me very much to set out for Florence immediately, and I have the greatest inclination in the world to do it; but, as I have already said, I am but too well convinced that all things are relative, and mankind was not made to follow their own inclinations. I have pushed as fair for liberty as any one; I have most philosophically thrown off all the chains of custom and subjection; and also rooted out of my heart all seeds of ambition and avarice. In such a state, if freedom could be found, that lot would sure be mine; yet certain atoms of attraction and repulsion keep me still in suspense; and I cannot absolutely set the day of my departure, though I very sincerely wish for it, and have one reason more than usual: this town being at present infested with English, who torment me as much as the frogs and lice did the palace of Pharaoh, and are surprised that I will not suffer them to skip about my house from morning till night; me, that never opened my doors to such sort of animals in England. I wish I knew a corner of the world inaccessible to *petits-mâîtres* and fine ladies. I verily believed when I left London I should choose my own company for the remainder of my days; which I find more difficult to do abroad than at home; and with humility I sighing own,

“Some stronger power eludes the sickly will,
Dashes my rising hope with certain ill;
And makes me with reflective trouble see,
That all is destin'd that I fancy'd free.”

I have talked to this purpose with the bearer of this letter: you may talk with him on any subject, for though our acquaintance has been very short, it has been long enough to show me that he has an understanding that will be agreeable in what light he pleases to show it.

¹ Probably Lady Pomfret's son, Lord Lempster.—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Venice, June 29 [1740].

YOUR ladyship's letter (which I have this minute received) would have been the most agreeable thing in the world, if it had been directed to another; but I can no more be charmed with it than a duellist can admire the skill by which he is mortally wounded. With all the respect I owe you, I cannot forbear saying, that no woman living ever reproached another with less reason than you do me at present. You can't possibly suspect I have got my chambermaid with child myself for a pretence to stay here. This is a crime of which all mankind will acquit me; and if she had any such malicious design in conceiving, I can assure you she had no orders from me; but, as the song says,

"'Tis e'en but a folly to flounce;
'Tis done, and it cannot be help."

As soon as she is able to travel, I will certainly set out, notwithstanding the information of your Popish priest. There's another thing; how can you pin your faith upon the sleeve of one of those gentlemen, against the assurances given you by a daughter of the Church of England? After this, you are obliged to me that I do not suspect he can persuade you into a belief in all the miracles in the Legend. All quarrelling apart, if neither death nor sickness intervene, you will certainly see me at Florence. I talk of you every day at present with Mr. Mackenzie,¹ who is a very pretty youth, much enchanted by the charms of Lady Sophia, who, I hear from all hands, so far outshines all the Florentine beauties, that none of them dare appear before her. I shall take great pleasure in being spectatress of her triumphs; but yet more in your ladyship's conversation, which was never more earnestly desired by any one than it is at this time by, dearest madam, Yours, &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[Venice, July, 1740.]

To convince you of my sincere impatience to see you,

¹ James Stuart Mackenzie, the younger brother of Lord Bute.—W.

though my waiting gentlewoman is not yet brought to bed, I am determined to set out the last day of this month, whether she is able to accompany me or not. I hope for one month's happiness with you at Florence; and if you then remove to Rome, I will wait on you thither, and shall find double pleasure in every fine thing I see in your company. You see, whatever acquaintance I have made at Venice, I am ready to sacrifice them to yours. I have already desired my London correspondents to address their letters to your palace, and am,

Most faithfully yours, &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[Venice] Aug. 12, N.S. [1740].

I AM going to give your ladyship a very dangerous proof of my zealous desire of seeing you. I intend to set out to-morrow morning, though I have a very swelled face; attended by a damsel who has lain in but sixteen days. I hope after this expedition you will never more call in doubt how much I am,

Yours, &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Bologna, Aug. 16 [N.S., 1740].

I AM thus far arrived towards the promised land, where I expect to see your ladyship; but shall stay here a day or two to prepare myself for the dreadful passage of the Apennines. In the mean time I have taken the liberty to direct two trunks and a box to your palace. The post is just going out, and hinders me from saying more than that I am

Ever yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF ——. ¹

Saturday—Florence.

I SET out from Bologne² the moment I had finished the letter I wrote you on Monday last, and shall now continue to inform you of the things that have struck me most in this

¹ This letter first appeared in the "Additional Volume" of 1767, before referred to. Its authenticity is extremely doubtful.—T.

² So in the original publication (1767), from which this letter is now printed.—T.

excursion. Sad roads—hilly and rocky—between Bologna and Fierenzuola. Between this latter place and Florence, I went out of my road to visit the monastery of La Trappe, which is of French origin, and one of the most austere and self-denying orders I have met with. In this gloomy retreat it gave me pain to observe the infatuation of men, who have devoutly reduced themselves to a much worse condition than that of the beasts. Folly, you see, is the lot of humanity, whether it arises in the flowery paths of pleasure, or the thorny ones of an ill-judged devotion. But of the two sorts of fools, I shall always think that the merry one has the most eligible fate; and I cannot well form a notion of that spiritual and ecstatic joy, that is mixed with sighs, groans, hunger, and thirst, and the other complicated miseries of monastic discipline. It is a strange way of going to work for happiness to excite an enmity between soul and body, which Nature and Providence have designed to live together in union and friendship, and which we cannot separate like man and wife when they happen to disagree. The profound silence that is enjoined upon the monks of La Trappe is a singular circumstance of their unsociable and unnatural discipline, and were this injunction never to be dispensed with, it would be needless to visit them in any other character than as a collection of statues; but the superior of the convent suspended in our favour that rigorous law, and allowed one of the mutes to converse with me, and answer a few discreet questions. He told me that the monks of this order in France are still more austere than those of Italy, as they never taste wine, flesh, fish, or eggs; but live entirely upon vegetables. The story that is told of the institution of this order is remarkable, and is well attested, if my information be good. Its founder was a French nobleman whose name was Bouthillier de Rancé, a man of pleasure and gallantry, which were converted into the deepest gloom of devotion by the following incident. His affairs obliged him to absent himself, for some time, from a lady with whom he had lived in the most intimate and tender connexions of successful love. At his return to Paris he pro-

posed to surprise her agreeably, and, at the same time, to satisfy his own impatient desire of seeing her, by going directly and without ceremony to her apartment by a back stair, which he was well acquainted with—but think of the spectacle that presented itself to him at his entrance into the chamber that had so often been the scene of love's highest raptures! his mistress dead—dead of the small-pox—disfigured beyond expression—a loathsome mass of putrified matter—and the surgeon separating the head from the body, because the coffin had been made too short! He stood for a moment motionless in amazement, and filled with horror—and then retired from the world, shut himself up in the convent of La Trappe, where he passed the remainder of his days in the most cruel and disconsolate devotion.—Let us quit this sad subject.

I must not forget to tell you that before I came to this monastery I went to see the burning mountains near Fierenzuola, of which the naturalists speak as a great curiosity. The flame it sends forth is without smoke, and resembles brandy set on fire. The ground about it is well cultivated, and the fire appears only in one spot where there is a cavity whose circumference is small, but in it are several crevices whose depths are unknown. It is remarkable that when a piece of wood is thrown into this cavity, though it cannot pass through the crevices, yet it is consumed in a moment, and that though the ground about it be perfectly cold, yet if a stick be rubbed with any force against it, it emits a flame, which, however, is neither hot nor durable like that of the volcano. If you desire a more circumstantial account of this phenomenon, and have made a sufficient progress in Italian to read Father Carrazzi's description of it, you need not be at a loss, for I have sent this description to Mr. F——, and you have only to ask it of him. After observing the volcano, I scrambled up all the neighbouring hills, partly on horseback, partly on foot, but could find no vestige of fire in any of them; though common report would make one believe that they all contain volcanoes.

I hope you have not taken it into your head to expect from

me a description of the famous gallery here, where I arrived on Thursday at noon ; this would be requiring a volume instead of a letter ; besides, I have as yet seen but a part of this immense treasure, and I propose employing some weeks more to survey the whole. You cannot imagine any situation more agreeable than Florence. It lies in a fertile and smiling valley watered by the Arno, which runs through the city, and nothing can surpass the beauty and magnificence of its public buildings, particularly the cathedral, whose grandeur filled me with astonishment. The palaces, squares, fountains, statues, bridges, do not only carry an aspect full of elegance and greatness, but discover a taste quite different, in kind, from that which reigns in the public edifices in other countries. The more I see of Italy, the more I am persuaded that the Italians have a style (if I may use that expression) in everything, which distinguishes them almost essentially from all other Europeans. Where they have got it, whether from natural genius or ancient imitation and inheritance, I shall not examine ; but the fact is certain. I have been but one day in the gallery, that amazing repository of the most precious remains of antiquity, and which alone is sufficient to immortalise the illustrious house of Medicis, by whom it was built, and enriched as we now see it. I was so impatient to see the famous Venus of Medicis, that I went hastily through six apartments in order to get a sight of this divine figure, purposing, when I had satisfied this ardent curiosity, to return and view the rest at my leisure. As I, indeed, passed through the great room which contains the ancient statues, I was stopped short at viewing the Antinous, which they have placed near that of Adrian, to revive the remembrance of their preposterous loves, which I suppose the Florentines rather look upon as an object of envy, than of horror and disgust. This statue, like that of the Venus de Medicis, spurns description : such figures my eyes never beheld—I can now understand that Ovid's comparing a fine woman to a statue, which I formerly thought a very disobliging similitude, was the nicest and highest piece of flattery. The Antinous is entirely naked ;

all its parts are bigger than nature ; but the whole taken together, and the fine attitude of the figure, carry such an expression of ease, elegance, and grace, as no words can describe. When I saw the Venus I was wrapped in wonder,—and I could not help casting a thought back upon Antinous. They ought to be placed together. They are worthy of each other. If marble could see and feel, the separation might be prudent. If it could only *see*, it would certainly lose its coldness and learn to feel, and in such a case the charms of these two figures would produce an effect quite opposite to that of the Gorgon's head, which turned flesh into stone. Did I pretend to describe to you the Venus, it would only set your imagination at work to form ideas of her figure, and your ideas would no more resemble that figure, than the Portuguese face of Miss N——, who has enchanted our knights, [*sic*] resembles the sweet and graceful countenance of Lady ——, his former flame. The description of a face or figure is a needless thing, as it never conveys a true idea ; it only gratifies the imagination with a fantastic one, until the real one is seen. So, my dear, if you have a mind to form a true notion of the divine forms and features of the Venus and Antinous, come to Florence.

I would be glad to oblige you and your friend Vertue, by executing your commission with respect to the sketches of Raphael's cartoons at Hampton Court ; but I cannot do it to my satisfaction. I have, indeed, seen in the grand-duke's collection, four pieces, in which that wonderful artist had thrown freely from his pencil the first thoughts and rude lines of some of these compositions ; and as the first thoughts of a great genius are precious, these pieces attracted my curiosity in a particular manner ; but when I went to examine them closely, I found them so damaged and effaced, that they did not at all answer my expectation. Whether this be owing to negligence or envy, I cannot say ; I mention the latter, because it is notorious that many of the modern painters have discovered ignoble marks of envy at a view of the inimitable productions of the ancients. Instead of employing their art

to preserve the masterpieces of antiquity, they have endeavoured to destroy and efface many of them. I have seen with my own eyes an evident proof of this at Bologna, where the greatest part of the paintings in fresco on the walls of the convent of St. Michael in Bosco, done by the Caracci and Guido Reni, have been ruined by the painters, who after having copied some of the finest heads, scraped them almost entirely out with nails. Thus you see nothing is exempt from human malignity.

The word malignity, and a passage in your letter, call to my mind the wicked wasp of Twickenham:¹ his lies affect me now no more; they will be all as much despised as the story of the seraglio and the handkerchief,² of which I am persuaded he was the only inventor. That man has a malignant and ungenerous heart; and he is base enough to assume the mask of a moralist, in order to decry human nature, and to give a decent vent to his hatred of man and woman kind.—But I must quit this contemptible subject, on which a just indignation would render my pen so fertile, that after having fatigued you with a long letter, I would surfeit you with a supplement twice as long. Besides, a violent headache advertises me that it is time to lay down my pen and get me to bed. I shall say some things to you in my next that I would have you to impart to the *strange man*, as from yourself. My mind is at present tolerably quiet; if it were as dead to sin, as it is to certain connexions, I should be a great saint. Adieu, my dear madam.

Yours very affectionately, &c.

¹ This, of course, refers to Pope.—T.

² Lady Mary, in one of the Letters during the Embassy (vol. i. p. 345), alludes to the story of the sultan's selecting one of the ladies of the seraglio by throwing a handkerchief, as "altogether fabulous." The allusion in the text is to a scandalous story which will be found in the Memoirs of the late Edw. W—ly M—tague, Esq., Dublin, 1779 (vol. i. p. 18); the writer of which informs his readers that Lady Mary's son was born during the period of her sojourn at Constantinople, "in the spring of the year 1718;" though, in fact, he was born several years before she left England.—T.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Florence, Aug. [September ?¹] 11 [O.S. 1740].

THIS is a very fine town, and I am much amused with visiting the gallery, which I do not doubt you remember too well to need any description of.² Lord and Lady Pomfret take pains to make the place agreeable to me, and I have been visited by the greatest part of the people of quality. Here is an opera which I have heard twice, but it is not so fine either for voices or decorations as that at Venice. I am very willing to be at Leghorn when my things arrive, which I fear will hinder my visiting Rome this season, except they come sooner than is generally expected. If I could go thence to [by ?] sea by [to ?] Naples with safety, I should prefer it to a land journey, which I am told is very difficult; and that it is impossible I should stay there long, the people being entirely unsociable. I do not desire much company, but would not confine myself to a place where I could get none. I have wrote to your daughter,³ directed to Scotland, this post.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Rome,⁴ Oct. 22, N.S. [1740].

I ARRIVED here in good health three days ago; this is the first post-day. I have taken a lodging for a month, which is (as they tell me) but a short time to take a view of all the antiquities, &c., that are to be seen. From hence I purpose to set out for Naples. I am told by everybody that I shall not find it agreeable to reside in. I expect Lady Pomfret's family here in a few days. It is summer here, and I left winter at Florence; the snows having begun to fall on the mountains.

¹ This letter, though dated "Aug. 11," is indorsed by Mr. Wortley Montagu "11 Sept., 1740," which was probably the true date, as he also indorsed, "Rec^d 24 Sep^r, Ans^d 6 Oct."—T.

² Lady Pomfret sent a long description of her visit to the gallery with Lady Mary, which the reader may also see in the Hertford and Pomfret Correspondence already mentioned, second edition, ii. 29, 55.—T.

³ The Countess of Bute.—T.

⁴ Lady Mary left Florence on the 16th October, N.S., 1740. The Countess of Pomfret, in a letter of that date, says, "Lady Mary's leaving Florence this morning has taken up so much of my time that I cannot extend this letter."—T.

I shall probably see the ceremony of the new Pope's taking possession of the Vatican, which is said to be the finest that is ever performed at Rome. I have no news to send from hence. If you would have me to speak to any particular point, I beg you will let me know it, and I will give you the best information I am able.

Be pleased to continue directing to Mr. Mann, the English resident at Florence. He will take care to send my letters wherever I am.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Oct. 22, N.S. [1740].

DEAR MADAM,—I flatter myself that your ladyship's goodness will give you some pleasure in hearing that I am safely arrived at Rome. It was a violent transition from your palace and company to be locked up all day with my chambermaid, and sleep at night in a hovel; but my whole life has been in the Pindaric style. I am at present settled in the lodging Sir Francis Dashwood¹ recommended to me. I liked that Mr. Boughton mentioned to me (which had been Sir Bouchier Wrey's²) much better; 'tis two zechins per month cheaper, and at least twenty more agreeable; but the landlord would not let it, for a very pleasant reason. It seems your gallant knight used to lie with his wife; and as he had no hopes I would do the same, he resolves to reserve his house for some young man. The only charm belonging to my present habitation is the ceiling, which is finer than that of the gallery; being all painted by the proper hand of Zuccherò, in perfect good preservation. I pay as much for this small apartment as your ladyship does for your magnificent palace; 'tis true I have a garden as large as your dressing-room. I walked last night two hours in that of Borghese, which is one of the most delightful I ever saw. I have diverted myself with a plain

¹ Sir Francis Dashwood, a very noted character in his time. He claimed and obtained the old barony of Le Despenser after the death of the Earl of Westmoreland.—W.

² Sir Bouchier Wrey, of Tavistock House, Devon, afterwards M.P. for Barnstaple. H. Walpole calls him "a very foolish knight."—T.

discovery of the persons concerned in the letter that was dropped in the Opera House. This is all the news I know, and I will not tire you with my thanks for the many civilities for which I am obliged to your ladyship; but I shall ever be highly sensible of them, and can never be other than, dear madam, your ladyship's

Most faithful humble servant.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Rome, Nov. 1, N.S. [1740].

I HAVE now been here a week, and am very well diverted with viewing the fine buildings, paintings, and antiquities. I have neither made nor received one visit, nor sent word to anybody of my arrival, on purpose to avoid interruptions of that sort. The weather is so fine that I walk every evening in a different beautiful garden; and I own I am charmed with what I see of this town, though there yet remains a great deal more to be seen. I propose making a stay of [a] month, which shall be entirely taken up in that employment, and then I will remove to Naples, to avoid, if possible, feeling the winter. I do not trouble you with any descriptions, since you have been here, and I suppose very well remember everything that is worth remembering; but if you would have me speak to any particular point, I will give you the best information is in my power. Direct your next letter to Monsieur Belloni, Banquier, à Rome. He will take care to deliver it to me, either here or at Naples. Letters are very apt to miscarry, especially those to this place.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Rome, Nov. 11 [1740].

I RECEIVED the honour of your ladyship's letter but last night. I perceive all letters are stopped. Two that you enclosed are from dear Mr. Mackenzie,¹ pressing with the most friendly solicitude my return to Venice, and begging me to let him meet me at Bologna. I am amazed at the good

¹ Mr. Mackenzie expressed throughout his life, and to the end of it, the highest opinion of Lady M. W. Montagu.—W.

nature of that youth. I could not wish a child of my own a more affectionate behaviour than he has shown to me; and that inducement is added to many others to incline me to Venice: but—— I intend for Naples next week; but as my stay there will not exceed fifteen days, I shall be again here before it is possible for you to arrive; where I wish you for your own sake. Here are entertainments for all tastes; and whatever notions I had of the magnificence of Rome, I can assure you it has surpassed all my ideas of it. I am sincerely concerned for Mr. Boughton, and wish the air of Pisa may recover his health.—I shall very readily tell your ladyship all I guess about the said letter. An English lady called Mrs. D’Arcie (what D’Arcie I can’t imagine) lodged in the house where I now am, and Sir Francis Dashwood was every day with her; she went from hence, by the way of Florence, to England. Putting this together, I supposed her the person concerned. This is all I know. You may see that I have no other advantage from this discovery but the bare satisfaction of my curiosity.—The Abbé Niccolini arrived last night; I believe I shall see him this evening. Here are yet no English of your acquaintance, except Lord Elcho. I am told Lord Lincoln¹ has taken a large house, and intends to keep a table, &c. The life I now lead is very different from what you fancy.—I go to bed every night at ten, run about all the morning among the antiquities, and walk every evening in a different beautiful villa; where if amongst the fountains I could find the waters of Lethe, I should be completely happy.

“Like a deer that is wounded I bleed and run on,
And fain I my torment would hide.
But alas! ’tis in vain, for wherever I run
The bloody dart sticks in my side,”

and I carry the serpent that poisons the paradise I am in. I beg your pardon (dear madam) for this impertinent account of myself; you ought to forgive it, since you would not be

¹ Lord Lincoln, afterwards Duke of Newcastle, was then a young man travelling in Italy with Spence, the friend of Pope, as his governor. They took up their abode in Rome in the beginning of December, and stayed there till May, 1741. It was here that Spence made the acquaintance of Lady Mary, whose conversations with him “at Rome” figure in his anecdotes.—T.

troubled with it, if I did not depend upon it that your friendship for me interests you in all my concerns; though I can no way merit it but by the sincerity with which I am, &c.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Rome] Nov. 12, N.S. [1740].

I RECEIVED this morning Mr. Child's bill on Gott and How for 200 [pounds]. I intend not to take it up till I go to Leghorn, where I design to go, to receive my things, which Mr. Mann writes me word are daily expected. I shall set out for Naples on next Friday: I do not doubt liking the situation, but by all the information I can get, it will be every way improper for my residence; and I propose no longer stay there than is necessary to see what is curious. I have been very diligent in viewing everything here; making no acquaintance, that I might have no interruption. Here is a statue of Antinous lately found, which is said to be equal to any in Rome, and it is to be sold; perhaps the Duke of Bedford¹ might be glad to hear of it. I do not hear of one valuable picture that is to be purchased. It has been this last week as dark and rainy as ever I saw it in England. Your letter of September 23 came to me but this day. I perceive letters are stopped and perused more carefully than ever, which hinders my writing any of the reports I hear; some of them are very extraordinary. The Emperor's ambassador here has taken the character of the Queen of Bohemia's, and, as such, presented his credentials, which have been received.

I wrote to you the last post very fully as to what concerns my son. I intend to write again to my daughter, though I have had no answer to my last.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Naples, Nov. 23, N.S. [1740].

I ARRIVED here last night, after a very disagreeable journey: I would not in my last give you any account of the present state of Rome, knowing all letters are opened there; but I

¹ John, fourth duke. He married, in 1737, Lady Mary's niece, Gertrude, eldest daughter of Lord Gower.—T.

cannot help mentioning, what is more curious than all the antiquities, which is, that there is literally no money in the whole town, where they follow Mr. Law's¹ system, and live wholly upon paper.

Belloni, who is the greatest banker not only of Rome but all Italy, furnished me with fifty sequins, which he solemnly swore was all the money he had in the house. They go to market with paper, pay the lodgings with paper, and, in short, there is no specie to be seen, which raises the prices of everything to the utmost extravagance, nobody knowing what to ask for their goods. It is said the present Pope² (who has a very good character) has declared he will endeavour a remedy, though it is very difficult to find one. He was bred a lawyer, and has passed the greatest part of his life in that profession; and is so sensible of the misery of the state, that he is reported to have said, that he never thought himself in want till since his elevation. He has no relations that he takes any notice of. The country belonging to him, which I have passed, is almost uninhabited, and in a poverty beyond what I ever saw. The kingdom of Naples appears gay and flourishing; and the town so crowded with people, that I have with great difficulty got a very sorry lodging.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Naples, Nov. 25, N.S. [1740].

HERE I am arrived at length, after a most disagreeable journey. I bought a chaise at Rome, which cost me twenty-five good English pounds: and had the pleasure of being laid low in it the very second day after I set out. I had the marvellous good luck to escape with life and limbs; but my delightful chaise broke all to pieces, and I was forced to stay a whole day in a hovel, while it was tacked together in such a manner as would serve to drag me hither. To say truth, this accident has very much palled my appetite for travelling. I

¹ Alluding to John Law, the projector of the Mississippi scheme.—T.

² Prospero Lambertini, famous for his wise and beneficent rule. He was elected on the 17th August preceding, and took the title of Benedict XIV.—T.

was last night at the opera, which is far the finest in Italy; it was the Queen's birth-night; the whole house was illuminated, and the court in its greatest splendour. Mrs. Allen is very well behaved, and (*entre nous*) her lover one of the prettiest men I ever saw in any country; but all is managed with the strictest decency. I have been diverted both at Rome and here with Lady W——'s¹ memoirs. The consul told me that when she first came here she was in the full fury of her passion for Mr. Sturgis. He went once to take the air in a coach with them, and her ladyship was so violent, he protested he had a great mind to have alighted and walked home on foot, rather than have been a spectator. I could not help laughing when I remembered our disputes.

I am informed here are many pretty houses to be had, and I own I have half a mind to send orders for my goods to be brought hither; but fixing is a point of such importance, it deserves to be well considered. I am now sitting comfortably without a fire, and a soft winter is an article of consequence. It is possible there may be as many intrigues here as in other places; but there is an outward decency that I am pleased with; and by what I see of the Neapolitans (contrary to their common character), they appear to me a better sort of people than the Romans, or (if you will give me leave to say it) the Florentines. There seems some tincture of Spanish honour

¹ Margaret Rolle, wife of Robert Lord Walpole. If Lady Mary's statement is to be believed (see letter to Lady Mar, i. 499), Lady Walpole was married before she was thirteen; but this was probably a slight exaggeration, implying only that she married very young. She parted from her husband in 1734, and went to Naples, and afterwards to Rome and Florence, in which city she was now residing. Horace Walpole alludes frequently to his sister-in-law and her profligate habits. When Lady Walpole was about to leave England, the wits of the Beef-steak Club showed their antipathy to Sir Robert by addressing her in the following "toast:"

"Go, sprightly Rolle, go, traverse earth and sea,
And fly the land where beauty is not free.
By your own wealth enslaved to one you hate,
Mourn not your own, but think on Britain's fate.
Life may be welcome on some happy shore,
Where not a W. [Walpole] shall approach thee more."

Lady Walpole had a large fortune, which was augmented shortly before the date of this letter by a considerable legacy from her uncle and guardian, Roger Tuckfield. She was afterwards married to Mr. Shirley, from whom she also separated. In 1751 she became a baroness in her own right, with the title of Clinton.—T.

amongst them; and in favour of that I can forgive a little Spanish formality. However, I have yet determined nothing; but wherever I am, I shall be, dear madam, faithfully yours, &c.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Naples, Dec. 6, N.S. [1740]

I HEARD last night the good news of the arrival of the ship on which my things are loaded, at Leghorn: it would be easy to have them conveyed hither. I like the climate extremely, which is now so soft, I am actually sitting without any want of a fire. I do not find the people so savage as they were represented to me. I have received visits from several of the principal ladies; and I think I could meet with as much company here as I desire; but here is one article both disagreeable and incommodious, which is the grandeur of the equipages. Two coaches, two running footmen, four other footmen, a gentleman usher, and two pages, are as necessary here as the attendance of a single servant is at London. All the Spanish customs are observed very rigorously. I could content myself with all of them except this: but I see plainly, from my own observation as well as intelligence, that it is not to be dispensed with, which I am heartily vexed at.

The affairs of Europe are now so uncertain, it appears reasonable to me to wait a little, before I fix my residence, that I may not find myself in the theatre of war, which is threatened on all sides. I hope you have the continuation of your health; mine is very well established at present.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Naples, Dec. 12, N.S. [1740].

I HAVE received half an hour ago two letters from you—the one dated October the 6th, the other the 23rd. I am surprised you have received none from me during the whole month of August, having wrote several; but I perceive all letters are stopped, and many lost. I gave my daughter a direction to me long since; but, as far as I can find, she has

never received either that or another which I directed to her in Scotland. The town lately discovered is at Portici, about three miles from this place. Since the first discovery, no care has been taken, and the ground fallen in, [so] that the present passage to it is, as I am told by everybody, extreme dangerous, and for some time nobody ventures into it. I have been assured by some English gentlemen, that were let down into it the last year, that the whole account given in the newspapers is literally true. Probably great curiosities might be found there: but there has been no expense made, either by propping the ground, or clearing a way into it; and as the earth falls in daily, it will possibly be soon stopped up, as it was before. I wrote to you, last post, a particular account of my reasons for not choosing my residence here, though the air is very agreeable to me, and I see I could have as much company as I desire; but I am persuaded the climate is much changed since you knew it. The weather is now very moist and misty, and has been so for a long time; however, it is much softer than in any other place I know. I desire you would direct to Monsieur Belloni, banker, at Rome: he will forward your letters wherever I am; the present uncertain situation of affairs all over Europe makes every correspondence precarious.

I am sorry to trouble you with the enclosed to my daughter; but as she seems concerned for not hearing from me, and I have reason to fear that no letter directed to her in Scotland will arrive safe, I send her these few lines.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Naples, Dec. 27, N.S. [1740].

I DID not write to you last post, hoping to have been able to have given you an account in this of everything I had observed at Portici; but I have not yet obtained the King's license, which must be had before I can be admitted to see the pictures, and fragments of statues which have been found there, and has been hitherto delayed on various pretences, it being at present a very singular favour. They say that some

English carried a painter with them the last year to copy the pictures, which renders it more difficult at present to get leave to see them. I have taken all possible pains to get information of this subterranean building, and am told 'tis the remains of the ancient city of Herculana, and by what I can collect, there was a theatre entire, with all the scenes and ancient decorations: they have broke it to pieces by digging irregularly. I hope in a few days to get permission to go, and will then give you the exactest description I am capable of. I have received no letters these three weeks, which does not surprise me though it displeases me very much, hearing the same complaint made by everybody. Mount Vesuvius is much diminished, as I am generally told, since the last great eruption, which was four years ago. The court here is magnificent, and all the customs entirely Spanish. The new opera-house, built by this king, is the largest in Europe. I hear a great deal of news, true or false, but cannot communicate it at this time. I hope my next letter will be more particular.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Rome, Jan, 13, N.S. [1741].

I RETURNED hither last night, after six weeks' stay at Naples; great part of that time was vainly taken up in endeavouring to satisfy your curiosity and my own, in relation to the late-discovered town of Herculana. I waited eight days, in hopes of permission to see the pictures and other rarities taken from thence, which are preserved in the king's palace at Portici; but I found it was to no purpose, his majesty keeping the key in his own cabinet, which he would not part with, though the Prince de Zathia (who is one of his favourites), I believe, very sincerely tried his interest to obtain it for me. He is son to the Spanish ambassador I knew at Venice, and both he and his lady loaded me with civilities at Naples. The court in general is more barbarous than any of the ancient Goths. One proof of it, among many others, was melting down a beautiful copper statue of a vestal found in this new ruin, to make medallions for the late solemn christen-

ing. The whole court follow the Spanish customs and politics. I could say a good deal on this subject if I thought my letter would come safe to your hands; the apprehension it may not, hinders my answering another inquiry you make, concerning a family here, of which, indeed, I can say little, avoiding all commerce with those that frequent it. Here are some young English travellers; among them Lord Strafford¹ behaves himself really very modestly and genteely, and has lost the pertness he acquired in his mother's assembly. Lord Lincoln appears to have spirit and sense, and professes great abhorrence of all measures destructive to the liberty of his country. I do not know how far the young men may be corrupted on their return, but the majority of those I have seen, have seemed strongly in the same sentiment. Lady Newburgh's eldest daughter,² whom I believe you may have seen at L. [Lord] Westmoreland's, is married to Count Mahony, who is in great figure at Naples: she was extreme obliging to me; they made a fine entertainment for me, carried me to the opera, and were civil to me to the utmost of their power. If you should happen to see Mrs. Bulkely,³ I wish you would make her some compliment upon it. I received this day yours of the 20th and 28th of November.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Rome, January 20, N.S. [1741].

THIS is the fourth letter I have wrote to your ladyship, since I had the honour of hearing from you. I own I am much mortified at it. I do not doubt my letters have miscarried, for I cannot believe your silence proceeds from any

¹ William Wentworth, the fourth Earl of Strafford, married Lady Anne, second daughter of John Duke of Argyll, sister of Lady Mary Coke and Lady Betty Mackenzie. He built the south front of Wentworth Castle, in Yorkshire, and was eminently skilled in architecture and virtù. He enjoyed an intimate friendship with the last Lord Orford, in the fifth volume of whose works his correspondence is published from 1756 to 1790.—D.

² Lady Frances Clifford, the daughter of the Countess of Newburgh by her first husband. Lady Newburgh was a peeress in her own right. She married, secondly, the Jacobite Charles Radcliffe, son of the Earl of Derwentwater, and after the rebellion fled with her husband to France.—T.

³ Mrs. Cantillon, one of Lady Mary's correspondents, now the wife of Colonel Bulkely, an Irish gentleman.—T.

other cause. In the mean time I must suffer greatly in your opinion if you think me stupid or ungrateful enough to neglect a correspondence which is every way so advantageous to me. I am returned from Naples, where I was much tempted to fix my residence, both from the charms of the climate, and the many civilities I met with. Some considerations made me decline it; and since my arrival here I have received such pressing and obliging letters from my friends at Venice, I can hardly resist my inclination to go thither. I am ashamed of my irresolution, but I own I am still undetermined. You see I confess to you all my weakness. My baggage is arrived at Leghorn; and, wherever I turn myself afterwards, it is necessary for me to go thither to give some orders concerning it; I only wait for the moonlight to begin my journey. I see all the English here every day, and amongst them Lord Lincoln, who is really, I think, very deserving, and appears to have both spirit and understanding. They all expect your ladyship's family here before the end of the carnival. I wish my affairs would permit me to stay till that time, if it be true you intend coming, otherwise the shows give me very little curiosity. The Abbé Niccolini is very obliging to me, but I fear his interest is not sufficient to do the service to my friend, that I endeavour with all my heart; though I've little hopes of success from what the Venetian ambassador told me last night. I had last post a great deal of news from England, but as I suppose you had the same, I do not trouble you with the repetition. I hope all your family continue in health and beauty.

I am ever, dear madam, your ladyship's, &c.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Rome, February 15 [1741].

YOUR ladyship's letters are so concise, I suppose you neither expected or desired a quick return to them; however, I could not let slip this opportunity of assuring you that you have still in being a very sincere (though perhaps insignificant) humble servant. If you could know all my behaviour here, you would be thoroughly convinced of this truth, and of my endeavours

to serve you. I was not at all surprised at the sight of Mr. Sturgis; he has the very face of a lover kicked out of doors; and I pity his good heart, at the same time I despise his want of spirit. I confess I am amazed (with your uncommon understanding) that you are capable of drawing such false consequences. Because I tell you another woman has a very agreeable lover, you conclude I am in love with him myself; when God knows I have not seen one man since I left you, that has affected me otherwise than if he had been carved in marble. Some figures have been good, others have been ill made: and all equally indifferent to me. The news I have heard from London is, Lady Margaret Hastings¹ having disposed of herself to a poor wandering methodist; Lady Lucy Manners being engaged to Mr. Pawlet; Miss Henshaw married to Captain Strickland; and Lady Carnarvon receiving the honourable addresses of Sir Thomas Robinson: here is a great heap of our sex's folly.

I intend setting out for Leghorn the next Sunday, and from thence I am yet undetermined. What is very pleasant, I have met two men exactly in the same circumstances. The one is Prince Couteau (brother to the Princess of Campo Florida), who has abandoned his country on being disgusted with his wife; and the other a Genoese abbé, who has both wit and learning in a very ugly form, and who on a disagreeable adventure is resolved never to return to Genoa. We often talk over every town in Europe, and find some objection or other to every one of them.

If it would suit your conveniency to see me at Sienna, I would stop there to receive that pleasure.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Leghorn, Feb. 25, N.S. [1741].

I ARRIVED here last night, and have received this morning the bill of nine hundred and five dollars, odd money.

¹ Lady Margaret Hastings, daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon, married the Rev. Benjamin Ingham, who had become a zealous disciple of John Wesley. Lord Wharnccliffe remarks, that, with this exception, "perhaps none of this news was true. Lady Lucy Manners certainly married the Duke of Montrose."—T.

I shall be a little more particular in my accounts from hence than I durst be from Rome, where all the letters are opened and often stopped. I hope you had mine, relating to the antiquities in Naples. I shall now say something of the court of Rome. The first minister, Cardinal Valenti, has one of the best characters I ever heard [of], though of no great birth, and has made his fortune by an attachment to the Duchess of Salviati. The present Pope is very much beloved, and seems desirous to ease the people and deliver them out of the miserable poverty they are reduced to. I will send you the history of his elevation, as I had it from a very good hand, if it will be any amusement to you. I never saw the chevalier¹ during my whole stay at Rome, I saw his two sons at a public ball in masque; they were very richly adorned with jewels. The eldest seems thoughtless enough, and is really not unlike Mr. Lyttelton² in his shape and air. The youngest is very well made, dances finely, and has an ingenuous countenance; he is but fourteen years of age. The family live very splendidly, yet pay everybody, and (wherever they get it) are certainly in no want of money. I heard at Rome the true tragical history of the Princess Sobieski,³ which is very different from what was said at London. The Pope, Clement the Twelfth, was commonly supposed her lover, and she used to go about publicly in his state coach, to the great scandal of the people. Her husband's mistress⁴ spirited him up to resent it, so far that he left Rome upon it, and she retired to a convent, where she destroyed herself. The English travellers at Rome behave in general very discreetly. I have reason to speak well of them, since they were all exceeding obliging to me. It may

¹ James Frederick Edward Stuart, the son of James II., generally called the Chevalier de St. George.—T.

² Afterwards Lord Lyttelton.—T.

³ Clementina, daughter of Prince James Sobieski of Poland.—T.

⁴ The wife of Colonel Hay, a gentleman in the Scotch Guards. Colonel Hay had been created by the Pretender Lord Inverness, by which title he was designated by the Jacobites. Mrs. Hay was believed to be the mistress of the Pretender; and it was said that Lord and Lady Mar were "driven from the Pretender's court to make way for the new favourite." Mrs. Hay was a daughter of Viscount Stormont. She is described by a contemporary as "a handsome woman but ambitious, and of an enterprising spirit."—T.

sound a little vain to say it, but they really paid a regular court to me, as if I had been their queen, and their governors told me, that the desire of my approbation had a very great influence on their conduct. While I stayed there was neither gaming nor any sort of extravagance. I used to preach to them very freely, and they all thanked me for it. I shall stay some time in this town, where I expect Lady Pomfret. I think I have answered every particular you seemed curious about. If there be any other point you would have me speak of, I will be as exact as I can. Direct, "*Recommandé à Monsieur Jackson, Négociant à Livourne l'Anglais.*"

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Leghorn, March 3rd [1741].

I AM extremely sorry (dear madam) that things have turned out so unluckily to hinder me the pleasure of your conversation; I really believed Lord Strafford intended to go straight to Florence, instead of which he has been at Leghorn, Pisa, and Lucca, which has occasioned these mistakes. When you arrive at Rome, I am persuaded you will be convinced of my endeavours to serve you; and I'm very positive nothing but ill management can hinder that affair from succeeding. I own it will require some skill, from the opposition it is like to meet with. I am now expecting every hour to be summoned on board, or I would take a trip to Florence to inform you of everything. I am sorry you seem to doubt the benignity of your stars; pray trust to mine, which (though of little use to myself) have never failed of showering some good fortune where I wished it, as I do most sincerely to you; being, dear madam,

Faithfully yours.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Turin] April 11, N.S. [1741].

I TAKE this opportunity of writing to you on many subjects in a freer manner than I durst do by the post,¹ knowing that

¹ This letter was conveyed by Mr. Mackenzie.—T.

all letters are opened both here and in other places, which occasions them to be often lost, besides other inconveniences that may happen. The English politics are the general jest of all the nations I have passed through ; and even those who profit by our follies cannot help laughing at our notorious blunders ; though they are all persuaded that the minister does not act from weakness but corruption, and that the Spanish gold influences his measures. I had a long discourse with Count Mahony on this subject, who said, very freely, that half the ships sent to the coast of Naples, that have lain idle in our ports last summer, would have frightened the Queen of Spain into a submission to whatever terms we thought proper to impose. The people, who are loaded with taxes, hate the Spanish government, of which I had daily proofs, hearing them curse the English for bringing their king to them, whenever they saw any of our nation : but I am not much surprised at the ignorance of our ministers, after seeing what creatures they employ to send them intelligence. Except Mr. Villette, at this court, there is not one that has common sense : I say this without prejudice, all of them having been as civil and serviceable to me as they could. I was told at Rome, and convinced of it by circumstances, there have been great endeavours to raise up a sham plot : the person who told it me was an English antiquarian, who said he had been offered any money to send accusations. The truth is, he had carried a letter, wrote by Mr. Mann,¹ from Florence to that purpose to him, which he showed in the English palace ; however, I believe he is a spy, and made use of that stratagem to gain credit. This court makes great preparations for war : the king is certainly no bright genius, but has great natural humanity : his minister, who has absolute power, is generally allowed to have sense ; as a proof of it, he is not hated as the generality of ministers are. I have seen neither of them, not going to court because I will not be at the trouble and expense of the dress, which is the same as at Vienna. I sent my

¹ Afterwards Sir Horace Mann, the friend and correspondent of Horace Walpole.—T.

excuse by Mr. Villette, as I hear is commonly practised by ladies that are only passengers. I have had a great number of visitors; the nobility piquing themselves on civility to strangers. The weather is still exceedingly cold, and I do not intend to move till I have the prospect of a pleasant journey.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Genoa, July 15 [1741].

IT is so long since I have heard from you, that though I hope your silence is occasioned by your being in the country, yet I cannot help being very uneasy, and in some apprehension that you are indisposed. I wrote you word some time ago, that I have taken a house here for the remainder of the summer, and desired you would direct, "*Recommandé à Monsieur Birtles, Consul de S. M. Britannique.*" I saw in the last newspapers (which he sends me) the death of Lord Oxford.¹ I am vexed at it for the reasons you know, and recollect what I've often heard you say, that it is impossible to judge what is best for ourselves.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Genoa, July 29, N.S. [1741].

I RECEIVED yesterday the bill for 250*l.*, for which I return you thanks. If I wrote you all the political stories I hear, I should have a great deal to say. A great part is not true, and what I think so, I dare not mention, in consideration of the various hands this paper must pass through before it reaches you. Lord Lincoln and Mr. Walpole (youngest son to Sir Robert) left this place two days ago; they visited me during their short stay; they are gone to Marseilles, and design passing some months in the south of France.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Genoa, Aug. 15, N.S. [1741].

I AM sorry to trouble you on so disagreeable a subject as our son, but I received a letter from him last post, in which

¹ See note opposite.—T.

he solicits your dissolving his marriage, as if it was wholly in your power, and the reason he gives for it, is so that he may marry more to your satisfaction. It is very vexatious (though no more than I expected) that time has no effect, and that it is impossible to convince him of his true situation. He enclosed this letter in one to Mr. Birtles, and tells me that he does not doubt that debt of 200*l.* is paid. You may imagine this silly proceeding occasioned me a dun from Mr. Birtles. I told him the person that wrote the letter, was, to my knowledge, not worth a groat, which was all I thought proper to say on the subject. Here is arrived a little while since, Count —, who was president of the council of war, and enjoyed many other great places under the late emperor. He is a Spaniard. The next day after his arrival, he went to the Doge, and declared himself his subject, and from thence to the archbishop, and desired to be received as one of his flock. He has taken a great house at Pierre l'Arène, where he sees few people, but what I think particular, he has brought with him thirty-five cases of books. I have had a particular account of Lord Oxford's death¹ from a very good hand, which he advanced by choice, refusing all remedies till it was too late to make use of them. There was a will found, dated 1728, in which he gave everything to my lady: which has affected her very much. Notwithstanding the many reasons she had to complain of him, I always thought there was more weakness than dishonesty in his actions, and is [*sic*] a confirmation of the truth of that maxim of Mr. Rochefoucault, *un sot n'a pas assez d'étoffe pour être honnête homme*.

¹ Edward Earl of Oxford, Pope's correspondent. Lord Orrery thus alludes to his death in a letter dated July 7, 1741: "Poor Lord Oxford is gone to those regions from whence travellers never return, unless in an airy visit to faithless lovers, as Margaret to William; or to cities devoted to destruction, as Hector amidst the flames of Troy. The deceased earl has left behind him many books, many manuscripts, and no money. His lady brought him five hundred thousand pounds; four of which have been sacrificed to indolence, good nature, and want of worldly wisdom; and there will still remain, after proper sales and right management, five thousand a year for his widow."—T.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Genoa] Aug. 25, N.S. [1741].

I RECEIVED yours of the 27th July this morning. I had that of March 19, which I answered very particularly the following post, with many thanks for the increase of my allowance. It appears to me that the letters I wrote between the 11th of April and the 31st of May were lost, which I am not surprised at. I was then at Turin, and that court in a very great confusion, and extreme jealous of me, thinking I came to examine their conduct. I have some proof of this, which I do not repeat, lest this should be stopped also.

The manners of Italy are so much altered since we were here last,¹ the alteration is scarce credible. They say it has been by the last war. The French, being masters, introduced all their customs, which were eagerly embraced by the ladies, and I believe will never be laid aside; yet the different governments make different manners in every state. You know, though the republic is not rich, here are many private families vastly so, and live at a great superfluous expense: all the people of the first quality keep coaches as fine as the Speaker's, and some of them two or three, though the streets are too narrow to use them in the town; but they take the air in them, and their chairs carry them to the gates. The liveries are all plain: gold or silver being forbidden to be worn within the walls, the habits are all obliged to be black, but they wear exceeding fine lace and linen; and in their country-houses, which are generally in the faubourg, they dress very rich, and have extreme fine jewels. Here is nothing cheap but houses. A palace fit for a prince may be hired for fifty pounds per annum: I mean unfurnished. All games of chance are strictly prohibited, and it seems to me the only law they do not try to evade: they play at quadrille, piquet, &c., but not high. Here are no regular public assemblies. I have been visited by all of the first rank, and invited to several fine dinners, particularly to the wedding of one of the house of Spinola, where there were ninety-six sat down

¹ On their return from Constantinople in 1718.—T.

to table, and I think the entertainment one of the finest I ever saw. There was the night following a ball and supper for the same company, with the same profusion. They tell me that all their great marriages are kept in the same public manner. Nobody keeps more than two horses, all their journeys being post; the expense of them, including the coachman, is (I am told) fifty pounds per annum. A chair is very near as much; I give eighteen francs a week for mine. The senators can converse with no strangers during the time of their magistracy, which lasts two years. The number of servants is regulated, and almost every lady has the same, which is two footmen, a gentleman-usher, and a page, who follows her chair.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Turin, October 2 [1741].

I HAD the honour of seeing Lord Lempster yesterday, who told me to my great surprise your letter complains of my silence, while I was much mortified at yours, having never heard once from you since I left Leghorn, though I have wrote several times. I suppose our frequent removals have occasioned this breach in our correspondence, which it will be a great pleasure to me to renew. I hear you are very well diverted at Bruxelles;¹ I am very much pleased here, where the people in general are more polite and obliging than in most parts of Italy. I am told Lady Walpole is at present at Verona, and intends to pass the carnival at Venice. Mrs. Pratt² passed this way last week; the Duchess of Buckingham is daily expected. Italy is likely to be blessed with the sight of English ladies of every sort and size. I stayed some time at Genoa, tempted to it by the great civilities I received there, and the opportunity of hiring a palace in the most beautiful situation I ever saw. I was visited there by Lord Lincoln and Mr. Walpole, who informed me that you hurried away from Venice, designing for England. I hope some good occa-

¹ Lady Pomfret had resided in Brussels since the previous July.—T.

² Daughter of John Pratt, Esq., of the city of Dublin, and sister of the wife of Sir George Savile. She appears to have been a connexion of the Duchess of Buckingham, and to have travelled with her.—T.

sion has stopped you. I do not doubt you have heard Mrs. Goldsworthy's melancholy history; which is very comical.¹ I saw often Signora Clelia Durazzo, who was your friend and very much mine; and we had the pleasure of talking frequently of your ladyship, in many parties we had together. I have thus given you a long account of my travels, I hope to have in return the history of yours. I am told, since I began this letter, that Miss Windsor,² who is very well married in Holland (I forget the name), is gone to Naples. I think I was very unlucky not to meet with her; I should be very glad to have an opportunity of showing my regard to your ladyship in serving any of your relations; and perhaps my experience might be of some use to a stranger. If my intelligence from hence can be any way agreeable to you, you have a right to command it. I wish I could show you more effectually how much I am

Ever yours.

Be pleased to direct, "Recommandé à Mons. Villette, Ministre de S. M. Britannique."

¹ Mrs. Goldsworthy, of whom we have an anecdote subsequently, was a daughter of Captain Vanbrugh, commander of a man-of-war. She married Barrington Goldsworthy, Esq., a nephew of Sir Charles Wager, and was now residing at Leghorn with her husband, who was British consul there. Walpole calls her "a pert little unbred thing;" and has several jokes upon her ignorance and affectation, but Walpole was prejudiced against her husband, whom he believed to be endeavouring to supplant his friend Mann at Florence. What was the "melancholy" history here alluded to does not appear; but it was probably the story of General Wachtendonck, commander of the grand-duke's troops at Leghorn, and "the hundred sequins per month" obscurely hinted at in Walpole's letter to Mann of Nov. 2, 1741. General Wachtendonck, according to Walpole, was a "Cicisbeo to the consul's wife." Her more serious misfortune, which happened somewhat later, may perhaps help to piece out the story. See letter to Lady Pomfret, Avignon, Nov. 4, N.S. [1742].—T.

² Thomas Windsor, created an Irish peer by King William III. by the title of Viscount Windsor, and a British peer by the title of Baron Mountjoy, by Queen Anne; married Charlotte (Lady Charlotte Herbert, only daughter of Philip seventh Earl of Pembroke), widow of John Jeffries, the second Lord Jeffries of Wem, the father of Lady Pomfret; so that Miss Windsor was half-sister to Lady Pomfret.—This Miss Windsor was married to Monsieur d'Estevan von Berkenrode, of the haute noblesse of Holland; afterwards for forty years the Dutch ambassador at Paris.—T.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Geneva, Oct. 12 [1741].

I ARRIVED here last night, where I find everything quite different from what it was represented to me: it is not the first time it has happened to me on my travels. Everything is as dear as it is at London. 'Tis true, as all equipages are forbidden, that expense is entirely retrenched. I have been visited this morning by some of the chief people in the town, who seem extreme good sort of people, which is their general character; very desirous of attracting strangers to inhabit with them, and consequently very officious in all they imagine can please them. The way of living is absolutely the reverse of that in Italy. Here is no show, and a great deal of eating; there is all the magnificence imaginable, and no dinners but on particular occasions; yet the difference of the prices renders the total expense very near equal. As I am not yet determined whether I shall make any considerable stay, I desire not to have the money you intend me, till I ask for it. If you have any curiosity for the present state of any of the states of Italy, I believe I can give you a truer account than perhaps any other traveller can do, having always had the good fortune of a sort of intimacy with the first persons in the governments where I resided, and they not guarding themselves against the observations of a woman, as they would have done from those of a man.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Geneva, Nov. 5, N.S. [1741].

I HAVE now been here a month: I have wrote to you three times without hearing from you, and cannot help being uneasy at your silence. I think this air does not agree with my health. I have had a return of many complaints from which I had an entire cessation during my stay in Italy, which makes me incline to return thither, though a winter journey over the Alps is very disagreeable. The people here are very well to be liked, and this little republic has an air of the simplicity of old Rome in its earliest age. The magistrates toil with their

own hands, and their wives literally dress their dinners against their return from their little senate. Yet without dress or equipage 'tis as dear living here for a stranger, as in places where one is obliged to both, from the price of all sort of provision, which they are forced to buy from their neighbours, having almost no land of their own. I am very impatient to hear from you. Here are many reports concerning the English affairs, which I am sometimes splenetic enough to give credit to.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Chambery, Nov. 30, N.S. [1741].

I RECEIVED this morning yours of October 26th, which has taken me out of the uneasiness of fearing for your health. I suppose you know before this the Spaniards are landed at different ports in Italy, &c. When I received early information of the design, I had the charity to mention it to the English consul (without naming my informer); he laughed, and answered it was impossible. This may serve for a small specimen of the general good intelligence our wise ministry have of all foreign affairs. If you were acquainted with the people they employ, you would not be surprised at it. Except Mr. Villette at Turin (who is a very reasonable man), there is not one of them who knows anything more of the country they inhabit than that they eat and sleep in it. I have wrote you word that I left Geneva on the sharpness of the air, which much disagreed with me. I find myself better here, though the weather is very cold at present. Yet this situation is not subject to those terrible winds which reign at Geneva. I dare write you no news, though I hear a great deal. Direct to me at Chambery, *en Savoye, par Paris*.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Chambery, December 3, N.S. [1741].

AT length, dear madam, I have the pleasure of hearing from you; I hope you have found everything in London to

your satisfaction. I believe it will be a little surprise to you to hear that I am fixed for this winter in this little obscure town; which is generally so much unknown, that a description of it will at least have novelty to recommend it. Here is the most profound peace and unbounded plenty that is to be found in any corner of the universe; but not one rag of money. For my part, I think it amounts to the same thing, whether one is obliged to give several pence for bread, or can have a great deal of bread for a penny, since the Savoyard nobility here keep as good tables, without money, as those in London, who spend in a week what would be here a considerable yearly revenue. Wine, which is equal to the best Burgundy, is sold for a penny a quart, and I have a cook for very small wages, that is capable of rivalling Chloé.¹ Here are no equipages but chairs, the hire of which is about a crown a week, and all other matters proportionable. I can assure you I make the figure of the Duchess of Marlborough, by carrying gold in my purse; there being no visible coin but copper. Yet we are all people that can produce pedigrees to serve for the Order of Malta. Many of us have travelled, and 'tis the fashion to love reading. We eat together perpetually, and have assemblies every night for conversation. To say truth, the houses are all built after the manner of the old English towns; nobody having had money to build for two hundred years past. Consequently the walls are thick, the roofs low, &c., the streets narrow, and miserably paved. However, a concurrence of circumstances obliges me to this residence for some time. You have not told me your thoughts of Venice. I heartily regret the loss of those letters you mention, and have no comfort but in the hopes of a more regular correspondence for the future. I cannot compassionate the countess, since I think her insolent character deserves all the mortifications Heaven can send her. It will be charity to send me what news you pick up, which will be always shown advantageously by your relation. I must depend upon your

¹ See note, *anté*, p. 25.

goodness for this ; since I can promise you no return from hence, but the assurance that I am

Ever faithfully yours.

Be pleased to direct as before to Mons. Villette, as the super-direction. Here are no such vanities as gilt paper, therefore you must excuse the want of it.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Chambery, Dec. 22 [1741].

I HAVE not heard from you since I came to this place ; but I think it very possible the letters may have miscarried : at this crisis all are suspected and opened, and consequently often lost. I send this by way of Geneva, and desire you would direct thither for me, recommended to Monsieur Guillaume Boisier.

The company here is very good and sociable ; and I have reason to believe the air the best in the world, if I am to form a judgment of it from the health and long life of the inhabitants. I have half a dozen friends, male and female, who are all of them near or past fourscore, who look and go about as if they were but forty. The provisions of all sorts are extreme good, and the wine is, I think, the most agreeable I ever tasted ; and though the ground is now covered with snow, I know nobody troubled with colds, and I observed very few chronical distempers. The greatest inconvenience of the country is the few tolerable rides that are to be picked out, the roads being all mountainous and stony ; however, I have got a little horse, and sometimes ramble about after the manner of the D. [Duchess] of Cleveland, which is the only fashion of riding here.

I am very impatient to hear from you, and hope your business does not injure your health.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Chambery, March 4, N.S. [1742].

I KNOW not whether to condole or congratulate your lady-

ship on the changes in England;¹ but whatever they are, I hope they will no way turn to your disadvantage. The present prospect of war in Italy hinders my return thither; and I live here in so much health and tranquillity, I am in no haste to remove. I am extremely glad to hear your affairs are settled to your satisfaction; I expect Lady Sophia shall be so very soon; at least, if my correspondents are not much mistaken in England, I shall have the honour of being her relation; and as I have had a long and familiar conversation with her lover, both at Rome and Genoa, I think he has a very uncommon merit, which may deserve her uncommon beauty;² which I am told is the admiration of her own country, as it was that of every other through which she passed. I know not whether to say Sir William Leman³ was very unlucky in not dying two years before he had committed a folly which will make his memory ridiculous; or very fortunate in having time given him to indulge his inclination, and not time enough to see it in its proper light. The Marquis of Beaufort is one of my best friends here; he speaks English as well as if he had been born amongst us, and often talks to me of Miss Jefferys.⁴

¹ Alluding to the downfall of Sir Robert Walpole, and the change of ministry.—T.

² This may be an allusion to Mr. Mackenzie, younger brother of Lord Bute (see *antè*, p. 69); but more probably to the young Lord Lincoln, whom Lady Mary did meet at Rome and Genoa, and whose passion for Lady Sophia Fermor was at this time the talk of the gossips in England. Lord Lincoln was only a distant connexion of Lady Mary. The lovers were both remarked for personal beauty; but their courtship did not prosper. Lady Sophia was married to Lord Carteret on the 20th March, 1744, and Lord Lincoln shortly afterwards to Catherine Pelham. Lady Sophia, it appears, was not the jilt, but the jilted. Horace Walpole quotes the following epigram as made on her marriage:

“ Her beauty, like the Scripture feast,
To which the invited never came,
Deprived of its intended guest,
Was given to the old and lame.”

Lord Carteret had been a widower less than a twelvemonth, and was fifty-four years of age. His young bride became stepmother to daughters at least ten or twelve years older than herself. Her fate was not a happy one. She died in eighteen months after her marriage, having just before given birth to a daughter.—T.

³ Sir William Leman married 18th September, 1737, Anna Maria Garetta Brett, daughter of Mrs. Brett, the alleged mother of Richard Savage. This was, I presume, the folly to which Lady Mary alludes: the lady had been the last mistress of George I. The ceremony of her marriage with Sir William Leman was performed by a Fleet parson. Sir William died 22nd December, 1741.—T.

⁴ This was Lady Pomfret's maiden name.—W.

The finest seat in this country belongs to him;¹ it is very near the town, finely furnished; and he has taken pleasure in making it resemble an English house. I have dined there several times. He has been married about seven years. His lady is a well-bred agreeable woman; and he has a little daughter about six years old, that is an angel in face and shape. She will be the greatest heiress of this province, and his ambition is to marry her in England. The manners and fashions of this place copy those of Paris. Here are two assemblies, always concluding with a good supper; and we have had balls during the carnival, twice a week; which, though neither so numerous nor magnificent as those in London, were perhaps full as agreeable. After having given your ladyship a sketch of this town, you may imagine I expect a return of intelligence from London; how you pass your time, and what changes and chances happen amongst our acquaintance. When you see Lady E. Spelman, or Mrs. Bridgman, I should be obliged to you if you told them I am still their humble servant. I hope you are persuaded that I am unalterably yours.

FROM MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

March 22, 1742.

OUR son embarked at Harwich on the 10th, after having been in England about three months. I hear he avoided coming near the sharpers, and is grown a good manager of his money. But his weakness is such that Mr. Gibson² with much difficulty prevailed with him to go back; and he writ a letter as if he was afraid he should come hither again unless he was soon advised what to do. He declares as if he wanted to be in the army, unless something more for his advantage is proposed; and I have said to Mr. G. I will not oppose his going into the army as a volunteer, but that I believe he may

¹ The marquis was a French nobleman.—T.

² Mr. Gibson was at this period a kind of tutor or "governor" of the son. Lady Mary appears to have disliked and distrusted him, but to have been unwilling, for some reason, to dispense with his services.—T.

take some course more to his advantage. I hear my Lord Carteret,¹ with whom he has been more than once, speaks well of his behaviour. But his obstinacy in staying here, and what he writes, incline me to think it will not be easy to persuade him to follow good advice. I cannot imagine any one is so likely as yourself to give an impartial account of him. Under this difficulty I can think of no better expedient than to advise him to apply to you for leave to come to some place where you may converse with him. I hope you may see him without being disturbed by him. If you appoint him to be at a place twenty miles or farther from that where you choose to reside, and order him to go by a feigned name, you may easily reach him in a post-chaise, and come back after you have passed a week where he is. And this you may do more than once, to make a full trial of him. And I wish he might stay within a certain distance of you, till you have given me an account of him, and have agreed to what is fixed between him and you.

He declares he sets his heart on being in England, but then he should give me such proofs as I require, that he is able to persevere in behaving himself like a reasonable man. These proofs may be agreed on between you and me, and I believe I shall readily agree to what you shall think right.

I think you should say nothing to him but in the most calm and gentle way possible, that he may be invited to open himself to you freely. He seems, I hear, shocked at your letter, in which you complained of his not regarding the truth, though I believe you made no mistake in it, unless your saying his marriage could not be dissolved. He knows very well it may by act of parliament, which is what he means when he writes he wants to be quit of his wife. He denies that he knew Birtles to be nephew to Henshaw, who lent the 200*l*. As he is commended by several here, and by more in Holland (who perhaps flatter him), it may seem wrong to speak to him with any show of warmth or anger.

I incline to think he has been made an enthusiast in Holland, and you would do well to try thoroughly whether he is in good

¹ Lord Carteret had just been appointed secretary of state.—T.

earnest, and likely to continue so. If he is, I need not mention how much caution should be used in speaking to him. I think, whatever his notions are, you would do well to say nothing to him, but what you would say before any company.

I shall advise him by Mr. G. to go to Langres,¹ or some place near it, where he may wait for your answer to such letter as he writes for leave to come to any place you appoint.

I shall give you fuller informations about him in a post or two, if not by this. I hope this affair will not be very troublesome to you, as you can retire from him whenever you please. He shall not have much more money than is sufficient to carry him to you. When you have furnished him with any, it shall be made good to you.

To tell you fully what I judge of him from the variety of accounts I have had, I incline to think he will for the future avoid thieves, and be no ill manager of his money. These, you will say, are great amendments; but I believe he will always appear a weak man. The single question seems to be whether he will be one of those weak men that will follow the advice of those who wish them well, or be governed by his own fancies, or by companions that will make a prey of him. In Holland he seems to have followed the advice of Captain Lintslager, and other persons of good credit. I believe he has been in no company here this last time but men [of] good credit, and I hear he values himself upon it. I have not heard so much, as I hope I shall in a week, of the opinion of those who conversed with him. If you have patience to pass away hours with him, you will know him better than any one.

I need not recommend to you the discoursing with him fully upon his patience, and his observing his promises strictly.

Mr. Gibson says his whole deportment and conversation is entirely different from what it was when he was here above four years ago, and that he seems another man.

To give you all the light I can into him, I send you letters writ to him by Captain Lintslager, and others. I also send

¹ Originally in the manuscript "by Bar-le-Duc."—T.

you extracts of his own letters, to show you how he has acted contrary to his professions. I doubt you will find him quite obstinate for going into the army, unless he may be quite certain of mending his circumstances some other way. He may perhaps speak of promises I made him by Mr. G.; but I made none, but that I would let him know by Mr. G. what I advised him to do as preferable to his going to the army. What I meant was his discoursing with you, if you allowed him, and his following your advice.

That you may have the state of the case more fully, I send you his letter to Mr. G., which came by the last mail, and a copy of that which Mr. G. will send him to-morrow.

Mr. G. told me our son thought it hard usage that orders should be given to confine him in Holland. I told Mr. G. that whenever he kept much company it would be right to get him confined, to prevent his going to the pillory or to the gallows.

As he excuses his coming over by the uneasiness he was under, I gave Mr. G. these words, viz. :

“The excuse of the uneasiness you should be under in doing right, is the same excuse which is constantly used by all murderers and robbers, and seems to have been taught you by the infamous company by which you were influenced when you was here above four years ago.”

Mr. G. said these words were too strong for him to write, and he changed them for a paragraph of his own, by which he says he means the same thing. He agreed it would be quite right in you to use these strong words; but you may do it in a gentle way.

He may have more cunning than is imagined to gain his points, and perhaps is not made uneasy by being abroad, and may have little or no inclination to go into the army, but thinks, to prevent it, I may give him some considerable advantage. If you seem not at all averse to his going, perhaps he will of himself quit that scheme, and go into some other that you may like better.

If you think it best he should make a campaign, you will

take care not to detain him too long. Perhaps you may recommend him to our minister at Turin, that he may serve in the Sardinian forces, where, if he should do wrong, it will be less known than if he did it in Flanders.

Perhaps, by another name, he might meet you unobserved at Lyons, or Pont Beau-Voisin. I need not mention that whatever money you put into his hands shall be repaid you at demand. If he goes back to Holland, I suppose 20*l.* is enough for his charges.

I have yours of the 24th February. Lord and Lady Bute seem to live well together. They lost their son (who was above a year old) on the 16th; he had fits and a fever. The surgeons say his brains were too large, and occasioned the fits. They are both retired to Richmond for ten days or a fortnight.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Lyons, April, 23, N.S. [1742].

I HAVE this minute received four letters from you, dated February 1, February 22, March 22, March 29. I fancy their lying so long in the post-offices may proceed from your forgetting to frank them, which I am informed is quite necessary. I am very glad you have been prevailed on to let our son take a commission: if you had prevented it, he would have always said, and perhaps thought, and persuaded other people, you had hindered his rising in the world; though I am fully persuaded that he can never make a tolerable figure in any station of life. When he was at Morins, on his first leaving France, I then tried to prevail with him to serve the Emperor as volunteer; and represented to him that a handsome behaviour one campaign might go a great way in retrieving his character; and offered to use my interest with you (which I said I did not doubt would succeed) to furnish him with a handsome equipage. He then answered, he supposed I wished him killed out of the way. I am afraid his pretended reformation is not very sincere. I wish time may prove me in the wrong. I here enclose the last letter I re-

ceived from him ; I answered it the following post in these words :

“ I am very glad you resolve to continue obedient to your father, and are sensible of his goodness towards you. Mr. Birtles showed me your letter to him, in which you enclosed yours to me, where you speak to him as your friend ; subscribing yourself his faithful humble servant. He was at Genoa in his uncle’s house when you was there, and well acquainted with you ; though you seem ignorant of everything relating to him. I wish you would make such sort of apologies for any errors you may commit. I pray God your future behaviour may redeem the past, which will be a great blessing to your affectionate mother.”

I have not since heard from him ; I suppose he knew not what to say to so plain a detected falsehood. It is very disagreeable to me to converse with one from whom I do not expect to hear a word of truth, and who, I am very sure, will repeat many things that never passed in our conversation. You see the most solemn assurances are not binding from him, since he could come to London in opposition to your commands, after having so frequently protested he would not move a step except by your order. However, as you insist on my seeing him, I will do it, and think Valence the properest town for that interview ; it is but two days’ journey from this place ; it is in Dauphiné. I arrived here Friday night, having left Chambéry on the report of the French designing to come soon thither. So far is certain, that the governor had given command for repairing the walls, &c. ; on which men were actually employed when I came away. But the court of Turin is so politic and mysterious, it is hard to judge ; and I am apt to believe their designs change according to circumstances.

I shall stay here till I have an answer to this letter. If you order your son to go to Valence, I desire you would give him a strict command of going by a feigned name. I do not doubt your returning me whatever money I may give him ; but as I believe, if he receives money from me, he will be making me frequent visits, it is clearly my opinion I should

give him none. Whatever you may think proper for his journey, you may remit to him.

I am very sorry for my daughter's loss, being sensible how much it may affect her, though I suppose it will be soon repaired. It is a great pleasure to me when I hear she is happy. I wrote to her last post, and will write again the next.

Since I wrote, I have looked everywhere for my son's letter, which I find has been mislaid in the journey. There is nothing more in it, than long professions of doing nothing but by your command; and a positive assertion that he was ignorant of Mr. Birtles's relation to the late consul.

Direct your next, "*Recommandé à M. Imbert, Banquier, à Lyons.*"

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Lyons, April 25, N.S. [1742].

ON recollection (however inconvenient it may be to me on many accounts), I am not sorry to converse with my son. I shall at least have the satisfaction of making a clear judgment of his behaviour and temper: which I shall deliver to you in the most sincere and unprejudiced manner. You need not apprehend that I shall speak to him in passion. I do not know that I ever did in my life. I am not apt to be overheated in discourse, and am so far prepared, even for the worst on his side, that I think nothing he can say can alter the resolution I have taken of treating him with calmness. Both nature and interest (were I inclined to follow blindly the dictates of either) would determine me to wish him your heir rather than a stranger; but I think myself obliged both by honour, conscience, and my regard for you, no way to deceive you; and I confess, hitherto I see nothing but falsehood and weakness through his whole conduct. It is possible his person may be altered since I saw him, but his figure then was very agreeable and his manner insinuating. I very well remember the professions he made to me, and do not doubt he is as lavish of them to other people. Perhaps Lord C. [Carteret] may think him no ill match for an ugly girl that sticks upon his

hands.¹ The project of breaking his marriage shows at least his devotion counterfeit, since I am sensible it cannot be done but by false witness. His wife is not young enough to get gallants, nor rich enough to buy them.

I make choice of Valence for our interview as a town where we are not likely to find any English, and he may if he pleases be quite unknown; which it is hardly possible to be in any capital town either of France or Italy. Here are many English of the trading sort of people, who are more likely to be inquisitive and talkative than any other. Near Chambery there is a little colony of English, who have undertaken the working of the mines in Savoy; in which they find very pure silver, of which I have seen several cakes of about eighty ounces each.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Lyons, May 2, N.S. [1742].

I RECEIVED this morning yours of April 12, and at the same time the enclosed which I send you. 'Tis the first I have received since the detection of that falsehood in regard to Mr. Birtles. I always sent my letters open, that Mr. Clifford (who has the character of sense and honesty) might be witness of what I said; and he not left at liberty to forge orders he never received. I am very glad I have done so, and am persuaded that had his reformation been what you suppose it, Mr. Clifford would have wrote to me in his favour. I confess I see no appearance of it. His last letter to you, and this to me, seems to be no more in that submissive style he has used, but like one that thinks himself well protected. I will see him, since you desire it, at Valence; which is a by-town, where I am less likely to meet with English than in any town in France; but I insist on his going by a feigned name, and coming without a servant. People of superior fortunes to him (to my knowledge) have often travelled from Paris to Lyons

¹ Lady Frances, youngest daughter of Lord Carteret. She had the good fortune to escape this "no ill match." She married twelve months later the Marquis of Tweeddale.—T.

in the *diligence*; the expense is but one hundred livres, 5*l.* sterling, all things paid. It would not be easy to me, at this time, to send him any considerable sum; and whatever it is, I am persuaded, coming from me, he would not be satisfied with it, and make his complaints to his companions. As to the alteration of his temper, I see the same folly throughout. He now supposes (which is at best downright childish) that one hour's conversation will convince me of his sincerity. I have not answered his letter, nor will not, till I have your orders what to say to him. Be pleased to direct, "Recommandé à Mons. Imbert, Banquier, à Lyons." I received his letter to-day.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Avignon] May 6, N.S. [1742].

I HERE send you enclosed the letter I mentioned of your son's; the packet in which it was put was mislaid in the journey; it will serve to show you how little he is to be depended on. I saw a Savoyard man of quality at Chambery, who knew him at Venice, and afterwards at Genoa, who asked me (not suspecting him for my son) if he was related to my family. I made answer he was some relation. He told me several tricks of his. He said, that at Genoa he had told him that an uncle of his was dead, and had left him 5000*l.* or 6000*l.* per annum, and that he was returning to England to take possession of his estate; in the mean time he wanted money; and would have borrowed some of him, which he refused. I made answer that he did very well. I have heard of this sort of conduct in other places; and by the Dutch letters you have sent me I am persuaded he continues the same method of lying; which convinces me that his pretended enthusiasm is only to cheat those that can be imposed on by it. However, I think he should not be hindered accepting a commission. I do not doubt it will be pawned or sold in a twelve-month; which will prove to those that now protect him how little he deserves it. I am now at Avignon, which is within one day's journey of Valence. I left Lyons last Thursday, but I have taken care that whatever letters come thither shall

oe sent to me. I came to this place, not finding myself well at Lyons. I thought the change of air would be of service to my health, and find I was not mistaken. All the road is filled with French troops, who expect orders to march into the K. of Sardinia's dominions.

I am in great pain for my daughter's situation, fearing that the loss of her son may have some ill effect in her present condition. I beg you would let me know the minute she is brought to bed.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, May 23, N.S. [1742].

I RECEIVED this morning yours of April 12 and 29th, and at the same time one from my son at Paris, dated the 4th instant. I have wrote to him this day, that on his answer I will immediately set out to Valence, and shall be glad to see him there. I suppose you are now convinced I have never been mistaken in his character; which remains unchanged, and what is yet worse, I think is unchangeable. I never saw such a complication of folly and falsity as in his letter to Mr. G. [Gibson]. Nothing is cheaper than living in an inn in a country town in France; they being obliged to ask no more than twenty-five sous for dinner, and thirty for supper and lodging, of those that eat at the public table; which all the young men of quality I have met have always done. It is true I am forced to pay double, because I think the decency of my sex confines me to eat in my chamber. I will not trouble you with detecting a number of other falsehoods that are in his letters. My opinion on the whole (since you give me leave to tell it) is, that if I was to speak in your place, I would tell him, "That since he is obstinate in going into the army, I will not oppose it; but as I do not approve, I will advance no equipage till I know his behaviour to be such as shall deserve my future favour. Hitherto he has always been directed, either by his own humour, or the advice of those he thought better friends to him than myself. If he renounces the army, I will continue to him his former allowance; notwithstanding his repeated disobedience, under

the most solemn professions of duty. When I see him act like a sincere honest man, I shall believe well of him; the opinion of others, who either do not know him or are imposed on by his pretences, weighs nothing with me."

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, May 30, N.S. [1742].

I RECEIVED this day yours of May 3rd. I have wrote to let my son know I am ready to meet him at Valence, on the first notice of his setting out. I think it very improbable that Lord St. [Stair] should make him any such promise as he told Mr. Anderson,¹ or even give him hopes of it. If he had any right notions, Paris is the last place he would have appeared in; since I know he owes Knight money, and perhaps many other people. I am very glad of my daughter's health, and hope you enjoy yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Avignon, June 1, N.S. [1742].

I HAVE changed my situation, fearing to find myself blocked up in a besieged town; and not knowing where else to avoid the terrors of war, I have put myself under the protection of the Holy See. Your ladyship being well acquainted with this place, I need not send you a description of it; but I think you did not stay in it long enough to know many of the people. I find them very polite and obliging to strangers. We have assemblies every night, which conclude with a great supper; and comedies which are tolerably well acted. In short, I think one may while away an idle life with great tranquillity: which has long since been the utmost of my ambition.

I never was more surprised than at the death of the Duchess of Cleveland;² I thought her discretion and constitution made to last at least as long as her father's. I beg you to let me

¹ Mr. Anderson was for some time tutor to Lady Mary's son. Lady Mary had great confidence in his integrity and good sense.—T.

² The Duchess was a daughter of Daniel Finch, Earl of Nottingham. She died in April, 1742.—T.

know what accident has destroyed that fine figure which seemed built to last an age. You are very unjust to me in regard to the Marquis of Beaufort; he is too much an Englishman not to be inquisitive after the news of London. There has passed nothing there since he left it that he has not been informed of. Lord Lempster can tell you that before I came to Turin he had mentioned to him that he had had the honour of seeing his mother. He removed from Chambery with his whole family about the same time I left it; and for the same reason they passed into Italy; and if Piedmont proves the theatre of war,¹ intend to refuge themselves at Lucca. I am much mortified that I can have no opportunity of giving him so great a pleasure as I know your compliment would be; his civilities to me deserving all possible gratitude. His daughter is but seven years old, a little angel both in face and shape. *A propos* of angels, I am astonished Lady Sophia does not condescend to leave some copies of her face for the benefit of posterity; 'tis quite impossible she should not command what matches she pleases, when such pugs as Miss Hamilton² can become peeresses; and I am still of opinion that it depended on her to be my relation.

Here are several English ladies established, none I ever saw before; but they behave with decency, and give a good impression of our conduct, though their pale complexions and stiff stays do not give the French any inclination to imitate our dress.

Notwithstanding the dulness of this letter, I have so much confidence in your ladyship's charity, I flatter myself you will be so good as to answer it. I beg you would direct to me, "Recommandé à Monsieur Imbert, Banquier, à Lyons;" he will take care to forward it to, dear madam,

Your faithful humble servant.

¹ Hostilities were now commencing between the Spaniards and the Sardinians.—T.

² Miss Hamilton, daughter of Lord Archibald Hamilton, married [in May, 1742] Earl Brooke, afterwards created Earl of Warwick: she was very little.—W.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, June 10, N.S. [1742].

I AM just returned from passing two days with our son, of whom I will give you the most exact account I am capable of. He is so much altered in his person, I should scarcely have known him. He has entirely lost his beauty, and looks at least seven years older than he is; and the wildness that he always had in his eyes is so much increased it is downright shocking, and I am afraid will end fatally. He is grown fat, but is still genteel, and has an air of politeness that is agreeable. He speaks French like a Frenchman, and has got all the fashionable expressions of that language, and a volubility of words which he always had, and which I do not wonder should pass for wit with inconsiderate people. His behaviour is perfectly civil, and I found him very submissive; but in the main, no way really improved in his understanding, which is exceedingly weak; and I am convinced he will always be led by the person he converses with either right or wrong, not being capable of forming any fixed judgment of his own. As to his enthusiasm, if he had it, I suppose he has already lost it; since I could perceive no turn of it in all his conversation. But with his head I believe it is possible to make him a monk one day and a Turk¹ three days after. He has a flattering, insinuating manner, which naturally prejudices strangers in his favour. He began to talk to me in the usual silly cant I have so often heard from him, which I shortened by telling him I desired not to be troubled with it; that professions were of no use where actions were expected; and that the only thing could give me hopes of a good conduct was regularity and truth. He very readily agreed to all I said (as indeed he has always done when he has not been hot-headed). I endeavoured to convince him how favourably he has been dealt with, his allowance being much more than, had I been his father, I would have given in the same case. The Prince of

¹ This estimate of her son was curiously confirmed by his subsequently adopting the Turkish costume and manner of life.—T.

Hesse, who is now married to the Princess of England, lived some years at Geneva on 300*l.* per annum. Lord Hervey¹ sent his son at sixteen thither, and to travel afterwards, on no larger pension than 200*l.*; and, though without a governor, he had reason enough, not only to live within the compass of it, but carried home little presents for his father and mother, which he showed me at Turin. In short, I know there is no place so expensive, but a prudent single man may live in it on 100*l.* per annum, and an extravagant one may run out ten thousand in the cheapest. Had you (said I to him) thought rightly, or would have regarded the advice I gave you in all my letters, while in the little town of Islestein, you would have laid up 150*l.* per annum; you would now have had 750*l.* in your pocket; which would have almost paid your debts, and such a management would have gained you the esteem of the reasonable part of mankind. I perceived this reflection, which he had never made himself, had a very great weight with him. He would have excused part of his follies, by saying Mr. G. had told him it became Mr. W.'s son to live handsomely. I made answer, that whether Mr. G. had said so or no, the good sense of the thing was noway altered by it; that the true figure of a man was the opinion the world had of his sense and probity, and not the idle expenses, which were only respected by foolish or ignorant people; that his case was particular, he had but too publicly shown his inclination to vanities, and the most becoming part he could now act would be owning the ill use he had made of his father's indulgence, and professing to endeavour to be no further expense to him, instead of scandalous complaints, and being always at his last shirt and last guinea, which any man of spirit would be ashamed to own. I prevailed so far with him that he seemed very willing to follow this advice; and I gave him a paragraph to write to G., which I suppose you will easily distinguish from the rest of his letter. He asked me if you had settled your estate. I made answer, that I did not doubt

¹ John Lord Hervey, Lady Mary's friend, and the husband of Mary Lepell.—T.

(like all other wise men) you always had a will by you; but that you had certainly not put anything out of your power to change. On that, he began to insinuate, that if I could prevail on you to settle the estate on him, I might expect anything from his gratitude. I made him a very clear and positive answer in these words: "I hope your father will outlive me, and if I should be so unfortunate to have it otherwise, I do not believe he will leave me in your power. But was I sure of the contrary, no interest nor no necessity shall ever make me act against my honour or conscience; and I plainly tell you, that I will never persuade your father to do anything for you till I think you deserve it." He answered by great promises of future good behaviour, and economy. He is highly delighted with the prospect of going into the army; and mightily pleased with the good reception he had from Lord St. [Stair]; though I find it amounts to no more than telling him he was sorry he had already named his aides-de-camp, and otherwise should have been glad of him in that post. He says Lord C. [Carteret] has confirmed to him his promise of a commission.

The rest of his conversation was extremely gay. The various things he has seen has given him a superficial universal knowledge. He really knows most of the modern languages, and if I could believe him, can read Arabic, and has read the Bible in Hebrew. He said it was impossible for him to avoid going back to Paris; but he promised me to lie but one night there, and go to a town six posts from thence on the Flanders road, where he would wait your orders, and go by the name of Mons. du Durand, a Dutch officer; under which name I saw him. These are the most material passages, and my eyes are so much tired I can write no more at this time. I gave him 240 livres for his journey.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, July 19, N.S. [1742].

I WAS very glad to observe in yours of June 21st (which I received this morning), that everything you think proper to be said to our son I have already said to him in the most pressing manner I was able. I am very willing to repeat it over again in my letters to him as soon as I know where to direct. I never heard from him since we parted, though he promised over and over to write from Paris.

All the English without distinction see the D. [Duke] of Ormond:¹ Lord Chesterfield² (who you know is related to him) lay at his house during his stay in this town; and to say truth, nothing can be more insignificant. He keeps an assembly where all the best company go twice in the week: I have been there sometimes, nor is it possible to avoid it while I stay here; I came hither not knowing where else to be secure, there being, at that time, strong appearances of an approaching rupture with France, and all Italy being in a flame. The D. [Duke] lives here in great magnificence, is quite inoffensive, and seems to have forgot every part of his past life, and to be of no party; and indeed this is perhaps the town in the whole world where politics are the least talked of.

I receive this minute a letter from our son, dated from Senlis. He says you have ordered him to return. I know not whether he means to England or Holland, neither does he give any direction to write to him. As soon as I have one, I will not fail to do it.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Avignon, Nov. 4, N.S. [1742].

I AM very much obliged to your ladyship for judging so rightly both of my taste and inclinations as to think it impos-

¹ The Duke of Ormond resided many years in Avignon.—T.

² Lord Chesterfield was not, properly speaking, related to the Duke of Ormond. Lady Elizabeth Butler, daughter to James Duke of Ormond, was the second wife of Lord Chesterfield's grandfather, Philip the second Earl of Chesterfield; but by her he had no children that survived, except a daughter married to the fourth Earl of Strathmore. Lord Chesterfield was the grandson of the third wife, Lady Elizabeth Dormer, daughter of Charles Earl of Carnarvon.—W.

sible I should leave a letter of yours unanswered. I never received that which you mention; and I am not surprised at it, since I have lost several others, and all for the same reason; I mean mentioning political transactions; and 'tis the best proof of wisdom that I know of our reigning ministers, that they will not suffer their fame to travel into foreign lands; neither have I any curiosity for their proceedings; being long ago persuaded of the truth of that histori-prophetical verse, which says,

“The world will still be ruled by knaves
And fools, contending to be slaves.”

I desire no other intelligence from my friends but tea-table chat, which has been allowed to our sex by so long a prescription. I believe no lady will dispute it at present. I am very much diverted with her grace's passion, which is, perhaps, excited by her devotion; being piously designed to take a strayed young man out of the hands of a wicked woman. I wish it may end as those projects often do, in making him equally despise both, and take a bride as charming as Lady Sophia; who, I am glad, has had a legacy from Mrs. Bridgeman, though I could have wished it had been more important. I hear the Duke of Cleveland will be happily disposed of to Miss Gage;¹ who, I do not doubt, will furnish his family with a long posterity, or I have no skill in airs and graces. This place affords us no news worth telling. I suppose you know Lady Walpole has been near dying; and that Mrs. Goldsworthy being detected *en flagrant délit*, is sent back to England with her children;² some of which, I hear, he disowns. I think her case not unlike Lady Abergavenny's;³ her loving

¹ No such marriage took place.—T.

² See note, *antè*, p. 96.—T.

³ Catherine, daughter of Lieutenant-General Talton. Lady Abergavenny's case created much sensation, and was scarcely less celebrated than the “misfortune” of Sophia Howe. She was detected in an intrigue with Richard Liddel, Esq., “her lord's intimate friend,” in November, 1729. The newspapers say “she was sent up the same day to London; where she died in December, about a fortnight after her delivery of a son, who died in the January following. Mr. L—l, to avoid paying the 10,000*l.* damages, fled beyond sea.” Her matrimonial adventures were otherwise sufficiently remarkable. Her first husband, the thirteenth Lord Abergavenny, died in his nineteenth year, leaving no issue; and she thereupon mar-

spouse being very well content with her gallantries while he found his account in them, but raging against those that brought him no profit. Be pleased to direct your next to Avignon, and I believe it will come safe to your ladyship's

Faithful humble servant.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

April 24 [1743].

I RECEIVED yesterday yours of March 24th. I am clearly of your opinion touching the distemper that has reigned all over Europe. The progress of it convinced me long since that it has been entirely owing to infection, and they say begun in Prague. Mr. Boswell [*sic*] and his lady,¹ Sir William Wentworth's daughter, arrived here two days ago. I invited them to dinner, and have shown them all the civilities in my power. They desire their compliments to you. She is a pretty, agreeable young woman. The Duke of Berwick passed here last week, and many other Spanish officers. As to what regards my son, I have long since fixed my opinion concerning him. Indeed, I am not insensible of the misfortune, but I look upon it as on the loss of a limb, which ceases to give solicitude by being irretrievable.

ried his cousin and successor. The Grub-street Journal inserted upon her death the following "Character of the Lady A—y:"

"Young, thoughtless, gay, unfortunately fair,
Her pride to please, and dressing all her care,
With too much kindness, and too little art,
Prone to indulge the dictates of the heart;
Flattered, caressed, solicited, admired;
By women envied, and by men desired;
At once from ease, from wealth, from honour torn,
She fell exposed to pain, to want, to scorn.
But when her sad disastrous tale is told
To the gay, young, as lecture, by the old,
Let both to kind compassion moved, bemoan
Her sudden ruin while her fault they own.
And say that when by lawless love betrayed,
From the right path of innocence she strayed,
She could not long, depressed by guilt and shame,
Survive the death of virtue and of fame."

The lines were attributed to the Duke of Dorset.—T.

¹ Diana, daughter of Sir William Wentworth of Bratton, county of York. She married Godfrey Bosville, Esq., of Gunthwaite.—T.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, June 1, N.S. [1743].

I HOPE you will take care not to return to London while it is in this unhealthy state. We are now very clear in these parts. Mrs. Bosville is gone to Turin, where they intend to reside; she had the good fortune to meet an English man-of-war on the coast, without which she would have found the passage very difficult. She had so much her journey at heart, that she undertook to ride over the mountains from Nissa to Savona, but I believe (notwithstanding her youth and spirit) would have found the execution impossible. She has chosen the most agreeable court in Europe, where the English are extremely caressed. But it is necessary to be young and gay for such projects. All mine terminate in quiet; and if I can end my days without great pains, it is the utmost of my ambition.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Oct. 18, N.S., 1743.]

I RECEIVED yours of September 21st, O.S., this day, October 18th, N.S., and am always glad to hear of your health. I can never be surprised at any sort of folly or extravagance of my son. Immediately on leaving me at Orange, after the most solemn promises of reformation, he went to Montelimart, which is but one day's post from thence, where he behaved himself with as much vanity and indiscretion as ever. I had my intelligence from people who did not know my relation to him; and I do not trouble you with the particulars, thinking it needless to expose his character to you, who are well acquainted with it. I am persuaded whoever protects him will be very soon convinced of the impossibility of his behaving like a rational creature.

I know the young Lady Carlisle;¹ she is very agreeable;

¹ The first wife of Lord Carlisle died in 1742. He married secondly, in June, 1743, Isabel, daughter of Lord Byron. She will be found included in Park's edition of Horace Walpole's Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors (iv. 363); her claim to that distinction being founded on a poem entitled "The Fairy Answer to Mrs. Greville's Prayer for Indifference," written by her, and a volume "On the Education of Daughters," of which she was the reputed author.—T.

but if I am not mistaken in her inclinations, they are very gay. Lady Oxford wrote to me last post that L. Strafford was then with her ; she informs me that the Duke of Argyll¹ is in a very bad state of health. I hope you will take care to preserve yours.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, Nov. 20, N.S. [1743].

I HAVE just received yours of October 24th, O.S., and am always very glad to hear of the continuation of your health. As to my son's behaviour at Montelimart, it is nothing more than a proof of his weakness ; and how little he is to be depended on in his most solemn professions. He told me that he had made acquaintance with a lady on the road, who has an assembly at her house at Montelimart, and that she had invited him thither. I asked immediately if she knew his name. He assured me no, and that he passed for a Dutch officer by the name of Durand. I advised him not to go thither, since it would raise a curiosity concerning him, and I was very unwilling it should be known that I had conversed with him, on many accounts. He gave me the most solemn assurances that no mortal should know it ; and agreed with me in the reasons I gave him for keeping it an entire secret ; yet rid straight to Montelimart, where he told at the assembly that he came into this country purely on my orders, and that I had stayed with him two days at Orange ; talking much of my kindness to him, and insinuating that he had another name, much more considerable than that he appeared with. I knew nothing of this, till several months after, that a lady of that country came hither, and meeting her in company, she asked me if I was acquainted with Monsieur Durand. I had really forgot he had ever taken that name, and made answer no ; and that if such a person mentioned me, it was probably some *chevalier d'industrie* who sought to introduce himself into company by a supposed acquaintance with me. She made answer, the

¹ The Duke of Argyll was the father-in-law of Lord Strafford.—T.

whole town believed so, by the improbable tales he told them ; and informed me what he had said ; by which I knew what I have related to you.

I expect your orders in relation to his letters.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, Dec. 20, N.S. [1743].

I RECEIVED yours of the 24th of November, O.S., yesterday. I send you the enclosed for my son, not knowing where to direct to him. I have endeavoured to write it according to your minutes, which are entirely just and reasonable. You, may, perhaps, hear of a trifle which makes a great noise in this part of the world, which is, that I am building ; but the whole expense which I have contracted for is but twenty-six pounds sterling. You know the situation of this town is on the meeting of the Rhône and Durance. On one side of it, within the walls, was formerly a fortress built on a very high rock ; they say it was destroyed by lightning : one of the towers was left part standing, the walls being a yard in thickness : this was made use of some time for a public mill, but the height making it inconvenient for the carriage of meal, it has stood useless many years. Last summer, in the hot evenings, I walked often thither, where I always found a fresh breeze, and the most beautiful land-prospect I ever saw (except Wharnccliffe) ; being a view of the windings of two great rivers, and overlooking the whole country, with part of Languedoc and Provence. I was so much charmed with it, that I said in company, that, if that old mill was mine, I would turn it into a belvidere ; my words were repeated, and the two consuls waited on me soon after, with a donation from the town of the mill and the land about it : I have added a dome to it, and made it a little rotunda for the 'foresaid sum. I have also amused myself with patching up an inscription, which I have communicated to the archbishop, who is much delighted with it ; but it is not placed, and perhaps never shall be.

1 " Hic, O viator! sub Lare parvulo,
 Maria hic est Conditâ, hic jacet,
 Defuncta humani laboris
 Sorte, supervacuaque vitâ.
 Non indecorâ pauperies [*sic*] nitens,
 Et non inerti nobilis otio,
 Vanoque dilectis popello
 Divitiis animosus hostis.
 Possis ut illam dicere mortuam,
 En terra jam nunc quantula sufficit!
 Exempta sit curis, viator,
 Terra sit illa levis, precare!
 Hic sparge flores, sparge breves rosas:
 Nam vita gaudet mortua floribus:
 Herbisque odoratis corona
 Vatis adhuc cinerem calentem."

You will know how I picked up these verses, though the archbishop did not.

TO MRS. FORSTER.²

[Avignon.]

DEAR MADAM,—I received yours with great pleasure, but a pleasure that is embittered (as most pleasures are) with some melancholy reflections. I cannot help thinking it a great cruelty of Fortune, that different circumstances should oblige me to live at such a distance from the woman in the world (I speak it from my heart) that I most wish to pass my life with. Your temper, your character, and conversation, are so infinitely to my taste, that I never can meet with anything to supply the loss of you. I had a letter from poor Morel two posts ago, who says he has sought you, but found you not. I agree with you, that his gentleness (and I believe that of all his species) approaches to insipidity. But is it not preferable to the mischievous vivacity of a great part of mankind? I look upon passions to be the root of all evil, and, in my opinion, we ought to search after such objects as can neither feel nor inspire them. If you were to see this town, you would think

¹ Lady Mary had the merit of applying Cowley's "Epitaphium vivi auctoris," published in his Works, of which this is a copy, with grammatical alterations where necessary.—D. Mr. Dallaway does not appear to have observed that Lady Mary, in making her grammatical alteration, has, as Mr. Bowles remarks, injured the metre of Cowley's lines.—T.

² From the Gentleman's Magazine for December, 1795. I have not found any other trace of Mrs. Forster.—T.

I am very happily placed on this scheme, and it is true here is nobody capable of pleasing ; but, on the other hand, here is a perpetual round of impertinence ; and I find myself as improperly lodged as if I inhabited a volery : the chattering of magpies, repetitions of parrots, and screaming of peacocks, are what I am ever entertained with, and it is as absurd to endeavour to reason with any of the people here as with the animals I have mentioned. My library is my sole resource. I should desire no other if I could talk with a friend like you, improving my reflections by communicating my own, but that is a blessing not to be for

Your faithful humble servant.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, Jan. 12, N.S. [1744].

I HAVE received yours of the 22nd December, half an hour ago. I always answer your letters the same post I receive them, if they come early enough to permit it ; if not, the post following. I am much mortified you have not received two I have wrote, and in the last a letter enclosed for my son. I cannot help being very much concerned at the continual trouble he is to you, though I have no reason to expect better from him. I am persuaded the flattery of G. [Gibson] does him a great deal of harm. I know G.'s way of thinking enough, not to depend on anything he says to his advantage ; much less on any account he gives of himself. I think 'tis an ill sign that you have had no letter from Sir J. Cope¹ concerning him. I do not doubt he would be glad to commend his conduct if there was any room for it. It is my opinion he should have no distinction, in equipage, from any other cornet ; and everything of that sort will only serve to blow his vanity, and consequently heighten his folly. Your indulgence has always been greater to him than any other parent's would have been in the same circumstances. I have always said so, and

¹ Soon afterwards well known from his defeat by the Highlanders, for which he was tried by court-martial and acquitted. Sir John was at this time with the army in Flanders.—T.

thought so. If anything can alter him, it will be thinking firmly that he has no dependence but on his own conduct for a future maintenance.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, Feb. 17, N.S. [1744].

I AM sorry you have given yourself so much trouble about the inscription. I find I expressed myself ill, if you understood by my letter that it was placed; I never intended it without your approbation, and then would have put it in the inside of the dome. The word "*pauperie*" is meant, as is shown by the whole line,

"Non indecorâ *pauperie* nitens,"

to be a life rather distant from ostentation than in poverty; and which answers very well to my way of living, which, though decent, is far from the show which many families make here. The nobility consists of about two hundred houses: among them are two dukes, that of Crillon and Guadagna; the last an Italian family, the other French. The Count of Suze, who also values himself very much on his pedigree, keeps a constant open table, as do several others. You will judge by that the provisions are exceeding cheap; but it is otherwise; the price of everything being high for strangers. But as all the gentlemen keep their land in their own hands, and sell their wine, oil, and corn, their housekeeping looks very great at a small expense. They have also all sort of *gibier* from their own lands, which enables them to keep splendid table. Their estates have never been taxed, the Pope drawing (as I am assured) no revenue from hence. The vicelegate has a court of priests, and sees little other company; which, I believe, is partly owing to the little respect the nobility show him, who despise his want of birth. There is a new one expected this spring, nephew to the Cardinal Acquaviva: he is young; and, they say, intends to live with great magnificence.

Avignon was certainly no town in the time of the Romans;

nor is there the smallest remains of any antiquity but what is entirely Gothic. The town is large, but thinly peopled; here are fourteen large convents, besides others. It is so well situated for trade, and the silk so fine and plentiful, that if they were not curbed, by [the] French not permitting them to trade, they would certainly ruin Lyons; but as they can sell none of their manufactures out of the walls of the town, and the ladies here, as everywhere else, preferring foreign stuffs to their own, the tradespeople are poor, and the shops ill furnished. The people of quality all affect the French manner of living; and here are many good houses. The climate would be as fine as that of Naples, if we were not persecuted by the north wind, which is almost a constant plague; yet, by the great age and surprising health I see many of them enjoy, I am persuaded the air is very wholesome. I see [some] of both sexes past eighty, who appear in all the assemblies, eat great suppers, and keep late hours, without any visible infirmity. It is to-day Shrove Tuesday; I am invited to sup at the Duchess of Crillon's; where I do not doubt I shall see near fifty guests, who will all of them, young and old, except myself, go masked to the ball that is given in the town-house. It is the sixth given this carnival by the gentlemen *gratis*. At the first there were one thousand two hundred tickets given out, many coming from the neighbouring towns of Carpentaras, Lisle, Orange, and even Aix and Arles, on purpose to appear there. Don Philip is expected here the 22nd: I believe he will not stay any time; and if he should, I think in the present situation it would be improper for me to wait on him. If he goes into company, I suppose I may indifferently see him at an assembly.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.¹

Avignon, March 25 [1744].

I TAKE this opportunity of informing you in what manner I came acquainted with the secret I hinted at in my letter of the 5th of February. The society of Freemasons at Nismes

¹ Indorsed "Brought by William." [Lady Mary's servant.]-T.

presented the Duke of Richelieu, governor of Languedoc, with a magnificent entertainment; it is but one day's post from hence, and the Duchess of Crillon, with some other ladies of this town, resolved to be at it, and almost by force carried me with them, which I am tempted to believe an act of Providence, considering my great reluctance, and the service it proved to be to unhappy innocent people. The greatest part of the town of Nismes are secret Protestants, which are still severely punished according to the edicts of Lewis XIV. whenever they are detected in any public worship. A few days before we came, they had assembled; their minister and about a dozen of his congregation were seized and imprisoned. I knew nothing of this; but I had not been in the town two hours, when I was visited by two of the most considerable of the Huguenots, who came to beg of me, with tears, to speak in their favour to the Duke of Richelieu, saying none of the Catholics would do it, and the Protestants durst not, and that God had sent me for their protection. The Duke of Richelieu was too well-bred to refuse to listen to a lady, and I was of a rank and nation to have liberty to say what I pleased; they moved my compassion so much, I resolved to use my endeavours to serve them, though I had little hope of succeeding. I would not therefore dress myself for the supper, but went in a domino to the ball, a masque giving opportunity of talking in a freer manner than I could have done without it. I was at no trouble in engaging his conversation: the ladies having told him I was there, he immediately advanced towards me; and I found, from a different motive, he had a great desire to be acquainted with me, having heard a great deal of me. After abundance of compliments of that sort, I made my request for the liberty of the poor Protestants; he with great freedom told me he was so little a bigot, he pitied them as much as I did, but his orders from court were to send them to the galleys. However, to show how much he desired my good opinion, he was returning, and would solicit their freedom (which he has since obtained). This obligation occasioned me to continue the conversation, and he asked me what

party the Pretender had in England; I answered, as I thought, a very small one. "We are told otherwise at Paris," said he; "however, a bustle at this time may serve to facilitate our other projects, and we intend to attempt a descent; at least it will cause the troops to be recalled, and perhaps Admiral Mathews will be obliged to leave the passage open for Don Philip."¹ You may imagine how much I wished to give you immediate notice of this; but as all letters are opened at Paris, it would have been to no purpose to write it by the post, and have only gained me a powerful enemy in the court of France, he being so much a favourite of the king's, he is supposed to stand candidate for the ministry. In my letter to Sir R[obert] W[alpole] from Venice, I offered my service, and desired to know in what manner I could send intelligence, if anything happened to my knowledge that could be of use to England. I believe he imagined that I wanted some gratification, and only sent me cold thanks.—I have wrote to you by the post an account of my servant's leaving me. As that is only a domestic affair, I suppose the letter may be suffered to pass. I have had no letter from my son, and am very sure he is in the wrong, whenever he does not follow your direction, who, apart from other considerations, have a stronger judgment than any of his advisers.

— —

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.²

[Received at Dover-street, Tuesday, May 2nd, O.S.³]

Avignon, April 13, N.S. [1744].

It is two posts since I had the honour of your ladyship's obliging letter, which is a longer time than I have ever yet been without returning thanks for that happiness; but the

¹ The French declared war against England, March 15, 1743-4. Admiral Mathews was then in command of the Mediterranean Fleet.—T.

² Henrietta Cavendish Holles, only daughter and heir of John Duke of Newcastle, married Edward second Earl of Oxford and Mortimer.—W.

³ This and similar memoranda at the head of these letters were no doubt made by Lady Oxford on receipt of the originals; nevertheless, they are in more than one instance erroneous. This letter, for example, appears from the allusion to the marriage of Lady Frances Gower and to the commencement of hostilities with France, to have been clearly written in 1744; but the 2nd of May, O.S., 1744, was a Wednesday.—T.

post is now stopped, and I should not have ventured to write at present, if I had not an opportunity of sending by an English family which is leaving this place, though I think a correspondence as inoffensive as ours might be permitted in the midst of war. There would be neither party nor contest in the world, if all people thought of politics with the same indifference that I do; but I find by experience that the utmost innocence and strictest silence is not sufficient to guard against suspicion, and I am looked upon here as capable of very great designs, at the same time that I am, and desire to be, ignorant of all projects whatever. It is natural, and (I think) just, to wish well to one's religion and country, yet as I can serve neither by disputes, I am content to pray for both in my closet, and avoid all subjects of controversy as much as I can; however, I am watched here as a dangerous person, which I attribute chiefly to Mrs. Hay,¹ who, having changed her own religion, has a secret hatred against every one that does not do the same. My health, which your ladyship inquires after so kindly, is extremely good; I thank God I am sensible of no distemper or infirmity: I hope all your complaints are vanished. I saw Lord Goring [Gowran] at Venice; he appeared to me a very well disposed young man. I hear Miss F. Leveson² has made a silly match, which I am sorry for, though I hope it may turn out better than is expected. I am concerned for poor Miss Cole's distresses; her merit deserves better fortune. Dearest madam, take care of yourself; while you live, there is always a great blessing allowed to

Your ladyship's most faithfully devoted servant.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, May 6 [1744].

I RECEIVED but this morning, May 6, N.S., yours dated March 22. I suppose this delay has been occasioned by the

¹ The reputed mistress of the Pretender, before alluded to.—T.

² Lady Frances Leveson Gower, another niece of Lady Mary. She married Lord John Sackville, second son of Lionel first Duke of Dorset. See note, *post*, p. 131.—T.

present disturbances; I do not doubt mine have had the same fate, but I hope you will receive them at length.

I am very well acquainted with Lady Sophia Fermor, having lived two months in the same house with her: she has but few equals in beauty, or graces. I shall never be surprised at her conquests. If Lord Carteret had the design you seem to think, he could not make a more proper choice; but I think too well of his understanding to suppose he can expect happiness from things unborn, or place it in the chimerical notion of any pleasure arising to him, from his name subsisting (perhaps by very sorry representatives) after his death. I am apter to imagine that he has indulged his inclination at the expense of his judgment; and it appears to me the more pardonable weakness. I end my reflections here, fearing my letter will not come inviolate to your hands.

I am extremely glad my account of Avignon had anything in it entertaining to you. I have really forgot what I wrote, my sight not permitting me to take copies: if there are any particulars you would have explained to you, I will do it to the best of my power. I can never be so agreeably employed as in amusing you.

You say nothing of my son. I guess you have nothing good to say.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Received at Dover-street, Monday, June 4th, O.S.]

[Avignon] June 1, N.S. [1744].

DEAREST MADAM,—I have many thanks to give you for the agreeable news of your health (which is always in the first place regarded by me), and the safe delivery of the Duchess of Portland,¹ whose little son will, I hope, grow up a blessing to you both. I heartily congratulate your ladyship on this increase of your family; may you long enjoy the happiness of seeing their prosperity!

I am less surprised at Lady Sophia's marriage than at the

¹ The Duchess of Portland, daughter of Lady Oxford, gave birth to a son on the 3rd of March, 1744.—T.

fortune Lord Pomfret has given her ; she had charms enough to expect to make her fortune, and I believe the raising of such a sum must be uneasy in his present circumstances. By the accounts I have received of Lady John Sackville,¹ I think the young couple are much to be pitied, and am sorry to hear their relations treat them with so much severity ; if I was in England, I would endeavour to serve them.

Mrs. Hay has behaved to me with a great deal of impertinence ; there is no principle to be expected from a woman of her character. Your ladyship need not mention your command of continuing our correspondence ; it is the only comfort of my life, and I should think myself the last of human beings if I was capable of forgetting the many obligations I have to you : if you could see my heart, you would never mention anything of that kind to me ; it is impossible to have a more tender and grateful sense of all your goodness, which, added to the real esteem I have of your merit, binds me to be eternally and inviolably your ladyship's most sincere and devoted servant.

Your ladyship will permit me to offer my compliments to the Duke and Duchess of Portland.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, June 12, N.S. [1744].

I BELIEVE William² may tell truth in regard to the ex-

¹ A manuscript note on this passage in a copy of Lady Mary's Works which I have seen, says that the lady was staying at her sister's, the Duchess of Bedford's, and that the marriage took place "after the birth of a child." The writer adds : "the duchess and the duke were indignant on the discovery of the intrigue. The child was born at Woburn Abbey on the Saturday, and they were married on the Sunday." Mrs. Delany, in a letter dated Feb. 11, 1743-4, gives a somewhat different version of the story. "The particulars of Miss Lewson. [Leveson Gower.] Surely I sent you a long story about her, as how she fell ill, and in the midst of her pains told the Duchess of Bedford (who they say was ignorant of her condition till that moment) that she had been married a year to Lord John Sackville. A wretched couple I fear they will prove. He is ill natured, and a man of no principle, and she has shown the world that she has little prudence."—T.

² Lady Mary's servant, William Turner, who with his wife accompanied her from England. They had been secretly married, and the fact gave Lady Mary much annoyance. They returned to England with their two children shortly before the date of this letter, the husband having had an attack of palsy.—T.

penses of his journey, making it at a time when the passage of the troops had doubled the price of everything; and they were detained ten days at Calais before they had permission to pass over. I represented these inconveniences to them before they set out; but they were in such a hurry to go, from a notion that they should be forced to stay, after a declaration of war, that I could not prevail on them to stay a week longer, though it would probably have saved a great part of their expense. I would willingly have kept them (with all faults), being persuaded of their fidelity, and that in case of any accident happening to me, you would have had a faithful account of my effects; but it was impossible to make them contented in a country where there is neither ale nor salt beef.

This town is considerably larger than either Aix or Montpellier, and has more inhabitants of quality than of any other sort, having no trade, from the exactions of the French, though better situated for it than any inland town I know. What is most singular is the government, which retains a sort of imitation of the old Roman: here are two consuls chosen every year, the first of whom from the chief noblesse; and there is as much struggling for that dignity in the Hôtel de Ville as in the Senate. The vice-legate cannot violate their privileges, but as all governors naturally wish to increase their authority, there are perpetual factions of the same kind as those between prerogative and liberty of the subject. We have a new vice-legate, arrived a few days since, nephew to Cardinal Acquaviva, young, rich, and handsome, and sets out in a greater figure than has ever been known here. The magistrate next to him in place is called the vignier, who is chosen every year by the Hôtel de Ville, and represents the person of the Pope in all criminal causes, but his authority [is] so often clipped by the vice-legates, there remains nothing of it at present but the honour of precedence, during his office, and a box at the playhouse gratis, with the *surintendance* of all public diversions. When Don Philip passed here, he began the ball with his lady, which is the custom of all the princes that pass.

The beginning of Avignon was probably a colony from Marseilles, there having been a temple of Diana on that very spot where I have my little pavilion. If there was any painter capable of drawing it, I would send you a view of the landscape, which is one of the most beautiful I ever saw.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Received at Dover-street, Monday, July 9th, O.S., 1744.]

Avignon, July 2, N.S. [1744].

I AM extremely glad to find by your ladyship's of the 7th of June, that your health is amended, and as I am persuaded that there is nothing more conducive to it than amusements, I think it extremely reasonable you should take that of embellishing your paternal seat, which, on many accounts, I think one of the most rational as well as agreeable you can take. Indeed, it is a sort of duty to support a place which has been so long dignified and distinguished by your ancestors, and I believe all people that think seriously, or justly, will be of that opinion; as for others, their censure ought to be wholly disregarded, as it is impossible to be avoided. There are many in the world incapable of any other sort of conversation except that of remarking the mistakes of others, and are very often so much mistaken themselves, they blame the most praiseworthy actions, and are so unacquainted with virtue, they do not know it when they see it. I hope your ladyship will live to see finished, and enjoy many years, the beautiful improvements you are making: if I am permitted to see them in your company, I shall esteem myself very happy; if I am so unfortunate to survive you, I have no more prospect of any pleasure upon earth. It is a very great truth, that as your friendship has been the greatest blessing and honour of my life, it is only that which gives me any pleasing view for those years that remain, which, be they few or many, are entirely devoted to you by, dear madam,

Your ladyship's most faithful obedient servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

Avignon, July 12, N.S. [1744].

It is but this morning that I have received the honour of your ladyship's obliging letter of the 31st of May; the other you mentioned never reached me, and this has been considerably retarded in its passage. It is one of the sad effects of war, for us miserable exiles, the difficulty of corresponding with the few friends who are generous enough to remember the absent. I am very sorry and surprised to hear your good constitution has had such an attack. In lieu of many other comforts I have that of a very uncommon share of health; in all my wanderings, having never had one day's sickness, though nobody ever took less care to prevent it. If any marriage can have a prospect of continued happiness, it is that of Lord and Lady Carteret. She has fortunately met with one that will know how to value her, and I know no other place where he could have found a lady of her education; which in her early youth has given her all the advantages of experience, and her beauty is her least merit. I do not doubt that of Lady Charlotte¹ will soon procure her a happy settlement. I am much pleased with my niece's meeting with Lord Goring;² he visited me at Venice, and seemed one of the most reasonable young men I have seen.

I endeavour to amuse myself here with all sorts of monastic employments, the conversation not being at all agreeable to me, and friendship in France as impossible to be attained as orange-trees on the mountains of Scotland: it is not the product of the climate; and I try to content myself with reading, working, walking, and what you'll wonder to hear me mention, building. I know not whether you saw when you were at Avignon the rock of Douse, at the foot of which is the vice-legate's palace; from the top of it you may see the four provinces of Venaisin, Provence, Languedoc, and Dauphiné;

¹ Lady Charlotte Fermor, second daughter of Lady Pomfret. She married two years later William Finch, Esq., brother to the Earl of Winchelsea.—T.

² The niece referred to was Miss Evelyn Leveson Gower, youngest daughter of Lady Mary's sister. She married Lord Gowran, afterwards Earl of Upper Ossory, on the 29th of June, 1744.—T.

with the distant mountains of Auvergne, and the near meeting of the Durance and Rhône which flow under it; in short, it is the most beautiful land-prospect I ever saw. There was anciently a temple of Diana, and another of Hercules of Gaul, whose ruins were turned into a fort, where the powder and ammunition of the town were kept, which was destroyed by lightning, about eighty years since. There remained an ancient round tower, which I said in presence of the consul I would make a very agreeable belvidere if it was mine. I expected no consequence from this accidental speech of mine; but he proposed to the Hôtel de Ville, the next day, making me a present of it; which was done *nemine contradicente*. Partly to show myself sensible of that civility, and partly for my own amusement, I have fitted up a little pavilion, which Lord Burlington¹ would call a temple; being in the figure of the Rotunda; where I keep my books and generally pass all my evenings. If the winds were faithful messengers, they would bring you from thence many sighs and good wishes. I have few correspondents in England, and you that have lived abroad know the common phrases that are made use of; "As I suppose you know everything that passes here;" or, "Here is nothing worth troubling you with;" this is all the intelligence I receive. You may judge, then, how much I think myself obliged to you, dear madam, when you tell me what passes amongst you. I am so ignorant, I cannot even guess at the improper marriages you mention. If it is Lady Mary Grey² that has disposed of herself in so dirty a manner, I think her a more proper piece of furniture for a parsonage-house than a palace; and 'tis possible she may have been the original product of a chaplain.

I believe your ladyship's good nature will lament the sudden death of the poor Marquis of Beaufort, who died of an apoplectic fit. He is a national loss to the English, being always ready to serve

¹ Pope's patron, celebrated as "the architect."—T.

² Lady Mary Grey, daughter of Henry Duke of Kent, married Dr. Gregory, Dean of Christchurch.—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to Dover-street, Monday, Aug. 13th, O.S.; received at Welbeck,
Thursday, 16th, O.S., 1744.]

Avignon, Aug. 10th, N.S. [1744].

I AM very glad your ladyship has been at Bulstrode,¹ being fully persuaded the good air and good company there will very much contribute to your health. Your satisfaction is the most agreeable news I can hear, though I am very well pleased that one of my nieces is so happily disposed of, but I was told it is Miss Evelyn, and not Miss Betty, that is now Lady Goring² [Gowran]. I am much obliged to Miss Cole for her remembrance, and am sorry the troubles of that good family are not at an end; there is very seldom merit without persecution, a good conscience is the most valuable of all blessings, and the only one that is beyond the power of fortune.

I hear that Pope³ is dead, but suppose it is a mistake, since your ladyship has never mentioned it: if it is so, I have some small curiosity for the disposition of his affairs, and to whom he has left the enjoyment of his pretty house at Twickenham, which was in his power to dispose, for only one year after his decease.⁴

Dear madam, I know not in what words to thank you for kind intentions for me in the lottery; I have had so many occasions of the same nature, it is not strange I want expressions to signify my gratitude: you interest yourself too much for one, that I fear is unlucky enough to render useless all your generous endeavours, and can never make you any return, notwithstanding the sincere and inviolable attachment with which I am, dearest madam,

Your ladyship's most faithful devoted servant.

¹ Near Gerard's Cross, Bucks, a seat of Lady Oxford's daughter's husband, the Duke of Portland.—T.

² The reader will have seen by a note on a previous letter that Lady Mary's first information was correct.—T.

³ The poet Pope. He died 30th of May, 1744.—T.

⁴ There is no special mention in Pope's will of his house. Martha Blount was the residuary legatee.—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to Dover-street, Tuesday, 18th Sept., O.S. ; received at Welbeck, Thursday, 20th Sept.]

Avignon, Sept. 14th, N.S. [1744].

THE disorder of your ladyship's health which you mention gives me the highest concern, though I hope it is now over, and that the good air of Welbeck will wholly establish it: I beg of you, with the utmost earnestness, that you would be careful of yourself; I can receive no proof of your friendship so obliging to me, though I am yours by every tie that can engage a grateful heart. Mr. Wortley has said nothing to me of his visit to your ladyship, nor can I guess on what account it was, but suppose it relating to some country interest; I know so well your just way of thinking, that I am sure you always act right. Mrs. Massam informed me of the hard fortune of poor Lady Euston:¹ I very much pity Lady Burlington, but should do it yet more, if there had not been some circumstances in her marrying her daughter, which make her in some measure blamable for the event; however, there can be no excuse for the brutal behaviour of her worthless husband. Your happy disposition of the charming Duchess of Portland secures you from all sorrows of that kind, and I pray to God you may live to see your grandchildren as happily settled: your life is the greatest blessing that can be bestowed on your family; I am fully persuaded they all think so, and I hope that consideration will be of force to make you

¹ George Earl of Euston was second son of Charles second Duke of Grafton, by Lady Henrietta, daughter of Charles Marquis of Worcester, son of Henry Duke of Beaufort. Lord Euston married, in 1741, Lady Dorothy, daughter of Richard third and last Earl of Burlington of that house: she died in April, 1742. Lord Euston died in 1747, leaving no children.—W.

The following is taken from a note to one of the Honourable Horace Walpole's letters to Sir Horace Mann, dated June 20th, 1743:

"Upon a picture of Lady Dorothy, at the Duke of Devonshire's at Chiswick, is the following touching inscription, written by her mother, which commemorates her virtues and her fate:

"Lady Dorothy Boyle, born May the 14th, 1724. She was the comfort and joy of her parents, the delight of all who knew her angelic temper, and the admiration of all who saw her beauty. She was married October 10th, 1741, and delivered (by death) from misery, May the 2nd, 1742.

"This picture was drawn seven weeks after her death (from memory), by her most affectionate mother, Dorothy Burlington.'"—W.

careful to preserve it: I need not add how dear it is to me, being to my last moment, dearest madam, with the tenderest affection,

Your ladyship's devoted servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to Dover-street, Saturday, O.S., Oct. 27; received at Welbeck, Monday, Oct. 29.]

Avignon, Oct. 15, N.S. [1744].

DEAREST MADAM—I have received but this day your ladyship's of August 29th: this length of passage is, I suppose, occasioned by the cessation of correspondence between Dover and Calais; all letters must now go round by Holland, which is a great grief to me, since I must now content myself to be some weeks longer before I can hear from my dearest Lady Oxford, whose kindness was the greatest comfort of my life. Everything that relates to you is of importance to me; I am therefore very much concerned that you have fallen into ill hands, in your building. This world is so corrupt it is difficult to meet with honesty in any station, and such good hearts as yours, which are not naturally inclined to suspicion, are often liable to be imposed on: if I could think myself capable of being any way useful to you, it would make this distance between us doubly painful to me. I am surprised Lord Burlington is unmentioned in Pope's will; on the whole, it appears to me more reasonable and less vain than I expected from him. I cannot conclude my letter without repeating my most earnest desire that you would consider your health in the first place, and let no business whatever interrupt your care of it; there is no expression can tell you how dear it is to

Your ladyship's most faithful and affectionate servant.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon, Oct. 29, N.S. [1744].

I HAVE wrote twice to you this month, but fear you may not have had either of them. I send this by Geneva. I received yours of September 29th this morning.

I am very much concerned for the ill state of poor Lady Oxford's health: she is the only friend I can depend on in this world (except yourself). She tells me she stays at Welbeck, having been cheated of some thousands by one she employed in her building there, and is very troublesomely engaged in setting things in order.

I have had a letter from my son of a very old date, but no direction where to answer it; there is nothing in it worth repeating. We have had unusual rains, but they are always welcome here, drought being the general complaint of this province.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to Dover-street, Tuesday, 20th Nov., O.S.; received at Welbeck, Thursday, 22nd Nov., O.S.]

Avignon, Oct. 29 [1744].

DEAREST MADAM,—I received your ladyship's obliging letter of September 24th this morning, and, some time since, that in which was a copy of Pope's will, for which I returned you my immediate thanks, but fear that letter miscarried, since I hear they should all be directed through Holland. These redoubled attacks of your cholic, which must necessarily weaken any constitution, give me inexpressible pain. I had, at the same time, a letter from Mr. Wortley that tells me your health is very uncertain. If I am so unhappy to survive you, I shall look upon myself as a widow and an orphan, having no friend in this world but yourself: if you saw the tears with which these lines are accompanied, you would be convinced of the sincerity of them; let me beg you upon my knees to take care of your life, and let no other regard whatever occasion the neglect of it. I fear the omission of the Bath waters this autumn season may be attended with ill consequences; for God's sake (dear madam) leave all things, when it is necessary to think of your own preservation. Mr. Wortley tells me Lady Peterborough¹ is with you, which I

¹ This must have been Mary the daughter of John Cox, Esq., of London, the wife of Charles fourth Earl of Peterborough, who succeeded his grandfather, the famous Lord Peterborough, in 1735.—W.

am glad of for both your sakes : he adds, that your alterations at Welbeck are in the best taste ; I pray Almighty God you may live many comfortable years to enjoy them, and that some part of the reward of your virtue may be in this world : these are the daily and most earnest prayers of

Your ladyship's most faithful and devoted servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Received at Welbeck, Monday, June 10th, O.S. ; came to Dover-street, 8th, O.S.]

Avignon, June 1 [1745].

DEAREST MADAM,—It is but this day I have received the pleasure of your ladyship's obliging letter ; it is impossible to tell you the joy it gave me after so long a silence, though very much abated by the account of your ill health. I pray with the utmost fervency that your journey may contribute to your recovery, and am persuaded that it is the safest, and most probable method of mending a constitution : I could wish it southward, not in regard to my own interest, but as a removal to a better air. I have often repeated to you how exceeding dear your life is to me ; if you valued it as much, all other considerations would be laid aside, when your preservation was in question. I believe the interruption of our correspondence may be partly owing to your ladyship's having forgot to direct your letter enclosed to Monsieur Pierre de Vos, à Rotterdam, Holland.

Whatever good fortune happens to me, must always come through your hands ; this is the first prize that ever came to my share, and it is owing to your ladyship in all senses.

My daughter wrote me word the last post, that Thoresby is utterly destroyed by fire ;¹ I cannot help feeling some concern, and at the same time making many reflections on the vanity of all worldly possessions : I thank God my heart is so entirely detached from them, that I never desire more than the small portion I enjoy.

¹ The Duke of Kingston's seat at Thoresby, in Nottinghamshire, was burnt down April 4th, 1745, nothing being saved but the writings, plate, and a little of the furniture.—T.

I finish my letter with the most earnest recommendations to your ladyship to take care of your health, and the assurances of the most unalterable gratitude and affection from, dearest madam,

Your most faithfully devoted humble servant.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Avignon June 8, N.S. [1745].

I HAVE this day yours of the 8th of April, O.S., and at the same time one from Lady Oxford, who has not received (as she says) any from me since November, though I have wrote several times.

I perfectly remember carrying back the manuscript you mention, and delivering it to Lord Oxford. I never failed returning to himself all the books he lent me. It is true, I showed it to the Duchess of Montague, but we read it together, and I did not even leave it with her. I am not surprised in that vast quantity of manuscripts some should be lost or mislaid, particularly knowing Lord Oxford to be careless of them, easily lending, and as easily forgetting he had done it.¹ I remember I carried him once one very finely illuminated, that, when I delivered, he did not recollect he had lent to me, though it was but a few days before. Wherever this is, I think you need be in no pain about it. The verses are too bad to be printed, excepting from malice, and since the death of Pope I know nobody that is an enemy to either of us. I will write to my son the first opportunity I have of doing it. By the post [it] is impossible at this time. I have seen the French list of the dead and wounded, in which he is not mentioned:² so that I suppose he has escaped. All letters, even directed to Holland, are opened; and I believe those to the army would be stopped.

I know so little of English affairs, I am surprised to hear Lord Granville has lost his power.

¹ Lord Oxford's collection is now well known as the "Harleian MSS." in the British Museum.—T.

² The disastrous battle of Fontenoy was fought on the 30th of April, 1745.—T

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to London, July 29, O.S.; received at Welbeck, Thursday,
Aug. 1, O.S., 1745.]

Avignon, July 25, N.S. [1745.]

DEAREST MADAM, — Your ladyship's letters are always greatly agreeable to me, but doubly so when they bring the news of your health: change of air and exercise are the best remedies I know; I am very glad you have experienced them, and hope you will on no account neglect the care of yourself. I cannot express to you how many uneasy moments I have had on that subject; 'tis the only way you can be wanting to your friends and family, but it is their greatest as well as tenderest interest, that you should take care to preserve a life so valuable as yours. I pass my time very disagreeably at present amongst the French, their late successes have given them an air of triumph that is very difficult for an English heart to suffer;¹ I think less of politics than most people, yet cannot be entirely insensible of the misfortunes of my country. I am very sorry for the Duke of Kingston; I believe, in his place, I should renounce building on^a a spot of ground that has been twice so unfortunate. I suppose you are now in the midst of your deserving family, and sincerely partake of all the blessings you enjoy in them. Your happiness cannot exceed your merit or my wishes. You will give me leave to present the Duchess of Portland with my respects, at the same time that I assure your ladyship that I am with the truest and most tender affection,

Dearest madam, inviolably yours.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.²

Avignon, Jan. 10, N.S. [1746].

I RETURN you many thanks for the trouble you have taken in sending me Miss Fielding's books: they would have been

¹ Lady Mary alludes to the recent victory of Fontenoy, and the successes of the French in Flanders.—T.

² Published in the Gentleman's Magazine for May, 1851, from the original in the possession of Robert Cole, Esq., F.S.A. Mr. Wortley indorsed this letter "1745," which meant 1745-6, as is evident from an unpublished letter from him to Lady Mary, dated "London, 4 March, 1745-6," in which he says: "The

much welcomer had they been accompanied with a letter from yourself. I received at the same time (which was but two days ago) one from Mr. Muilman,¹ who informed me that you were at the waters of Pyrmont. The date is so old I suppose you are long since returned to England. I hope your journey has been rather for pleasure than necessity of health. I suppose your travelling (of which I never had any notice from you) has occasioned the miscarriage of the many I have wrote to you. I directed them all to Cavendish-square (which perhaps you have left) excepting the last, which I enclosed to my daughter. I have never heard from her since, nor from any other person in England, which gives me the greatest uneasiness; but the most sensible part of it is in regard of your health, which is truly and sincerely the dearest concern I have in this world. I am very impatient to leave this town, which has been highly disagreeable to me ever since the beginning of this war, but the impossibility of returning into Italy, and the law in France which gives to the king all the effects any person deceased dies possessed of, and I own that I am very desirous my jewels and some little necessary plate that I have bought, should be safely delivered into your hands, hoping you will be so good to dispose of them to my daughter. The Duke of Richelieu flattered me for some time that he would obtain for me a permission to dispose of my goods, but has not yet done it, and you know the uncertainty of court promises.

I beg you to write, though it is but two lines. 'Tis now many months since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you.²

Pyrmont waters and travelling agreed with me very much. In coming from Harwich I sprained my shoulder."—T.

¹ A banker at Amsterdam, through whose hands some of Lady Mary's letters passed.—T.

² The letters of Lady Mary to her husband are with hardly any exception indorsed with a curious minuteness, of which the following, on the present letter, may serve as a specimen:

"L. M. 10 Jan., 1745. Thanks for Miss Fielding's books.—Supposes my travelling occasioned the miscarriage of many letters: she wrote all directed to Cavendish-square: the last enclosed to our daughter—has never heard since from any one in England—her concern about me. Does not go to France fearing her jewels might go to the king, which she desires may go to her daughter. Many months since she heard from me; desires me to write, though but two lines. Rec^d. 22 Jan. Ans^d. 4 Mar."—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to Dover-street, Saturday, May 17th, O.S., 1746; received at Welbeck, Monday, May 19, O.S.]

[Avignon] Feb. 7, N.S. [1746].

DEAREST MADAM,—It is impossible to express my uneasiness from your silence: I troubled your ladyship, not many days ago, with a long account of it; not foreseeing the present opportunity of sending this, by one of the late D. of Ormond's servants, who has desired me to give a certificate of his behaviour to Lord Arran.¹ In justice to him, I cannot refuse saying, that I think I saw none in that large family (where there was as much faction and ill management as in any court in Europe) that seemed to serve with so much fidelity and attachment: I have that opinion of his honesty, if it was suitable to my little affairs, I would retain him in my own service. Your ladyship (who is always ready to do good) will mention this to Lady Arran. I say nothing of many other things relating to that family which do not concern me; to say truth, the melancholy letters I have from my daughter dispirits me so much, I am hardly capable of thinking on anything else excepting yourself, who is always first in my thoughts, and will be last in my prayers whenever it pleases God to dismiss from this troublesome world,

Your ladyship's most faithful obedient servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to Dover-street, Saturday, Feb. 22, O.S.; received at Welbeck, Monday, Feb. 24th, O.S., 1745.²]

Avignon, Feb. 15, N.S. [1746].

DEAREST MADAM,—I received by the last post an account from Mr. Wortley of your ladyship's kind inquiries after me; 'tis the first time I have heard from him of many months,

¹ See note on next letter.—T.

² Lady Oxford dates according to the civil or ecclesiastical year ending 24th of March. The 22nd of February fell on a Saturday in 1746, not in 1745. See, in confirmation, Lady Mary's letter dated "Avignon, June 8, N.S." (*antè*, p. 141), and indorsed by Mr. Wortley, "1745," in which she speaks of Lady Oxford not having received any letter from her "since November."—T.

though he has wrote many times, and I find all my letters have miscarried. I never received that which he tells me you was so good to send by Child, nor any other since September, which I answered immediately; I have addressed several others to you, by different ways, but I fear with equal ill fortune; the last I sent was by a servant of the late D. of O. [Duke of Ormond] who accompanies his corpse. I flatter myself (by having now heard from England, and that one of mine to my daughter is come to her hands) that the post is now open. I can assure you (dearest madam) that during all my uneasiness on the interruption of our correspondence, I feared for your health, but never once suspected your forgetting me; I have had too many proofs of your unwearied friendship to think you capable of changing, and, however insignificant I am, I am perfectly persuaded that you will ever retain the goodness you have always had for me, which whenever I forfeit, I must forfeit my reason, since only the loss of that can make me unmindful of your virtue and merit. I believe Lord Arran¹ has been much abused in the disposition of his brother's affairs: I cannot help hating the sight of injustice so much, it is with difficulty I restrain myself from meddling, notwithstanding the experience I have, of its being a very thankless office in that family. I cannot express to your ladyship what a comfort it is to me to hear of your health, nor how much I have suffered by the uncertainty of it. I hope our civil broils are now over, and that I may once more have the satisfaction of assuring you frequently that I am ever, dearest madam, inviolably

Your ladyship's obedient faithful servant.

My compliments and good wishes attend your family.

¹ Charles Butler, second and last surviving son of Thomas Earl of Ossory, eldest son of the first Duke of Ormond. He died without issue in 1758. See Honourable Horace Walpole's letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated Christmas-day, 1758.—W.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to London, Friday, April 18th, 1746, O.S.; received at Welbeck, Monday, April 21st, 1746, O.S.]

Dated, I suppose, from Avignon, April 11th, N.S.]

DEAREST MADAM,—I received the happiness of your ladyship's of February 26th but this morning, April 11th, N.S. It has been a long time on the road, but since I have it at length, I ought to be contented. The news here is, in general, peace, which seems wished by all sides. When it is settled, I hope our correspondence will meet with no further interruption; it is the greatest comfort of my life, and doubly so when I am informed of the recovery of your health. I believe the air of Welbeck (which was that of your infancy) will agree better with you than any other, which makes me wish your ladyship would continue in it as long as your affairs permit. I wrote a letter to you by a servant of the late D. of Ormond, who asked me a sort of certificate of his honesty, I supposed in order to justify him to Lord Arran, to whom he had (as he said) been misrepresented. I said to you, what I really thought at the time; I have since heard that the poor man is disordered in his head, and that he is parted from the other servants with whom he travelled. I know not what is become either of him or my letter; however, there was nothing in it that can be of any prejudice, containing only my constant assurances of the tenderest friendship for you, and complaints of your silence, which was then so painful to me, I was glad to snatch at any occasion, where there appeared a possibility of conveying a letter to you; not doubting but those by the post had been lost. Dearest madam, while I have life, I shall ever be, with the highest sense of gratitude,

Your ladyship's most faithful affectionate servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to Dover-street, Thursday, June 12th, 1746; received at Brodsworth, Sunday, June 15th, O.S.]

[Avignon, June 3, N.S., 1746.]

DEAREST MADAM,—I had the happiness of receiving two

of your ladyship's ever kind letters this day, June 3rd, N.S. I need not repeat my gratitude, which is always in the highest degree; and yet I think it far below what I owe you, as the best and truest friend that I ever was blest with. If I am to believe the public accounts, I have reason to hope our intestine troubles are now over; I wish one article in your ladyship's of April 23rd may prove certain: it cannot fail of being to our advantage. I will say nothing more of affairs that may occasion my letter being stopped; I am persuaded they are all opened more than once.

I hear the Duchess of Manchester¹ is married, but I cannot learn to whom. No news interests me so much, as that of your health; it is the highest obligation you can lay on me, to take care of it. I am quite ashamed of the trouble you give yourself in relation to the lottery; you will not be thanked, or I should say more on that subject. You will permit me to make my acknowledgments to the Duke and Duchess of Portland for their obliging remembrance: may they long continue blessings to you and each other!

We have had such long and surprising rains in this country, there has been an inundation in this town that hindered many people from stirring out of their houses: mine happens to be situated so high that I suffered nothing from it; the consequences would, however, have been very bad if it had lasted, but was over in two days. I cannot conclude without renewing my solicitations for the care of yourself, with my earnest prayers for your welfare, which are uttered with the greatest zeal by, dearest madam, your ladyship's

Most faithful and affectionate servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to Dover-street, Tuesday, July 29th, O.S., 1746; received at Welbeck, Thursday, July 31st, O.S.]

Avignon, July 20, N.S. [1746].

DEAREST MADAM,—I sincerely beg your ladyship's pardon

¹ She married Edward Hussey, Esq., afterwards Lord Beaulieu. The reader will find remarks on this marriage in subsequent letters.—T.

for what I said in regard to Wilson,¹ since I perceive it has occasioned you some trouble; it was only an attestation of what I thought due to an honest man, that appeared to me hardly dealt with by a pack of knaves. I am neither surprised nor offended at Lord Arran's conduct; he has suffered so much in his own interest by misplacing his confidence, nobody ought to be angry at his mistakes towards others.

This is the first time of my life I have been two posts without making my acknowledgments for your ladyship's ever kind letters, which are the comforts of my life; nothing could have hindered my doing it but an indisposition in my eyes, which are still too bad to suffer me to write long, but I fear your tenderness would be in pain for my health if I delayed giving you some account of it. God preserve yours, and add to it every other blessing! I can say no more but the constant repetition of my being ever, dearest madam,

Your most faithfully affectionate humble servant.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Brescia, Aug. 23, N.S. [1746].

YOU will be surprised at the date of this letter, but Avignon has been long disagreeable to me on many accounts, and now more than ever, from the concourse of Scotch and Irish rebels that choose it for their refuge, and are so highly protected by the vice-legate, that it is impossible to go into any company without hearing a conversation that is improper to be listened to, and dangerous to contradict. The war with France hindered my settling there for reasons I have already told you; and the difficulty of passing into Italy confined me, though I was always watching an opportunity of returning thither. Fortune at length presented me one.

I believe I wrote you word, when I was at Venice, that I saw there the Count of Wackerbarth, who was governor to the Prince of Saxony, and is favourite of the King of Poland, and the many civilities I received from him, as an old friend

¹ No doubt the servant of the "late Duke of Ormond" previously referred to.—T.

of his mother's. About a month since came to Avignon, a gentleman of the bedchamber of the prince, who is a man of the first quality in this province, I believe charged with some private commission from the Polish court. He brought me a letter of recommendation from Count Wackerbarth, which engaged me to show him what civilities lay in my power. In conversation I lamented to him the impossibility of my attempting a journey to Italy, where he was going. He offered me his protection, and represented to me that if I would permit him to wait on me, I might pass under the notion of a Venetian lady. In short, I ventured upon it, which has succeeded very well, though I met with more impediments in my journey than I expected. We went by sea to Genoa, where I made a very short stay, and saw nobody, having no passport from that state, and fearing to be stopped, if I was known. We took post-chaises from thence the 16th of this month, and were very much surprised to meet, on the Briletta, or Pochetta, the baggage of the Spanish army, with a prodigious number of sick and wounded soldiers and officers, who marched in a very great hurry. The Count of Palazzo¹ ordered his servants to say we were in haste for the service of Don Philip, and without further examination they gave us place everywhere; notwithstanding which, the multitude of carriages and loaded mules which we met in these narrow roads, made it impossible for us to reach Scravalli till it was near night. Our surprise was great to find, coming out of that town, a large body of troops surrounding a body of guards, in the midst of which was Don Philip in person, going a very round trot, looking down, and pale as ashes. The army was in too much confusion to take notice of us, and the night favouring us, we got into the town, but, when we came there, it was impossible to find any lodging, all the inns being filled with wounded Spaniards. The Count went to the governor, and asked a chamber for a Venetian lady, which he granted very readily; but there was nothing in it but the bare walls, and in less than a quarter of an hour after the whole house was empty both of furniture

¹ See Memoir of Lady Mary prefixed to this edition, vol. i. p. 43.—T.

and people, the governor flying into the citadel, and carrying with him all his goods and family. We were forced to pass the night without beds or supper. About daybreak the victorious Germans entered the town. The Count went to wait on the generals, to whom, I believe, he had a commission. He told them my name, and there was no sort of honour or civility they did not pay me. They immediately ordered me a guard of hussars (which was very necessary in the present disorder), and sent me refreshments of all kinds. Next day I was visited by the Prince of Badin Dourlach, the Prince Louïestein, and all the principal officers, with whom I passed for a heroine, showing no uneasiness, though the cannon of the citadel (where was a Spanish garrison) played very briskly. I was forced to stay there two days for want of post-horses, the postmaster being fled, with all his servants, and the Spaniards having seized all the horses they could find. At length I set out from thence the 19th instant, with a strong escort of hussars, meeting with no further accident on the road, except at the little town of Voghera, where they refused post-horses, till the hussars drew their sabres. The 20th I arrived safe here. It is a very pretty place, where I intend to repose myself at least during the remainder of the summer. This journey has been very expensive; but I am very glad I have made it. I am now in a neutral country, under the protection of Venice. The Doge is our old friend Grimani, and I do not doubt meeting with all sort of civility. When I set out I had so bad a fluxion on my eyes, I was really afraid of losing them: they are now quite recovered, and my health better than it has been of some time. I hope yours continues good, and that you will always take care of it. Direct for me at Brescia by way of Venice.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Brescia, Nov. 24, N.S. [1746].

I BRAGGED too soon of my good health, which lasted but two days after my last letter. I was then seized with so violent a fever that I am surprised a woman of my age could

be capable of it. I have kept my bed two months, and am now out of it but a few hours in the day. I did not mention in my last (thinking it an insignificant circumstance) that Count Palazzo had wrote to his mother (without my knowledge) to advertise her of my arrival. She came to meet me in her coach and six, and it was impossible to resist her importunity of going to her house, where she would keep me, till I had found a lodging to my liking. I had chose one when I wrote to you, and counted upon going there the beginning of the week following, but my violent illness (being, as all the physicians thought, in the utmost danger) made it utterly impossible. The Countess Palazzo has taken as much care of me as if I had been her sister, and omitted no expense or trouble to serve me. I am still with her, and indeed in no condition of moving at present. I am now in a sort of milk diet, which is prescribed me to restore my strength. From being as fat as Lady Bristol, I am grown leaner than anybody I can name. For my own part, I think myself in a natural decay. However, I do what I am ordered. I know not how to acknowledge enough my obligations to the countess; and I reckon it a great one from her who is a *dévoté*, that she never brought any priest to me. My woman, who is a zealous French Huguenot, I believe would have tore his eyes out. During my whole illness it seemed her chief concern. I hope your health continues good.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to London, Tuesday, April 14th, 1747, O.S.; came to Welbeck, Thursday, April 16th, 1747, O.S.]

Brescia, March 1, N.S. [1747].

DEAREST MADAM,—Your ladyship's obliging letter of January 17th, O.S., came to me yesterday; it gave me great pleasure, and at the same time mortification on reflecting that you should suffer so much uneasiness on my account. I am now (I think I may say) quite recovered, which is almost a miracle. I believe few people of my age ever did, of so severe and so long a fit of sickness. I hope you think me in the

right in leaving Avignon, which is now all full of miserable refugees; France I should not have been permitted to stay in, and I am quiet in a republic that is in our alliance, which is all the present aim that I have. Your ladyship says nothing of your own health; I flatter myself it is good; I beg of you that you will never give yourself any concern about mine. My life is useless to the world, and (almost) tiresome to myself.

I did not know Mrs. Stanton was dead. I have so few correspondents in England, that everything from thence is news to me. I never received your ladyship's letter of August 23rd, which I suppose was owing to my removal. That part of Italy I passed in coming hither, has suffered so much by the war, that it is quite different from when I left it. I wish every Englishman was as sensible as I am of the terrible effects of arbitrary government, some of the most plentiful parts of the world being reduced to near a famine. This province, which is free from troops, enriches itself by the poverty of its neighbours, which occasions all provisions to be as dear as in England. The carnival here has been very gay and magnificent; I had no share of either, being at that time confined to my chamber, and having no taste for diversions of that nature. In all situations I am ever, dearest madam, with the tenderest affections of my heart,

Your ladyship's most faithful

And most obedient servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to London, Wednesday, July 15th, O.S.; came to Welbeck,
Saturday, July 18th, O.S.]

Brescia, July 1 [1747].

DEAREST MADAM,—'Tis so long since I have had the honour of hearing from you, that I cannot help being in concern for your health; mine is much mended by the country air, and the great regularity with which I live. I flatter myself it is the fault of the post, that I have not the happiness of hearing from you. I pray for peace on many accounts, but chiefly that our correspondence may become more certain. I

can say with truth 'tis the only pleasure of my life, and 'tis no small one, to think I have a friend of your merit.

I am told Lord Coke¹ is married to Lady M. Campbell: I knew him when he was at Venice, and believe her economy will be a very necessary ally to the expensiveness of his temper. Mr. Wortley (who is the only correspondent I have in London except my daughter) tells me you have made Welbeck a very delightful place: it was always so by the situation, I do not doubt of the improvement by your good taste. If wishes had the power of conveying the person, your ladyship would soon see me there, but I fear there is not so much felicity in store for me. God's will be done! wherever I am, I can never be other than, with the tenderest affection,

Your ladyship's most faithful devoted servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Lovere, July 24, N.S. [1747].

DEAR CHILD,—I am now in a place the most beautifully romantic I ever saw in my life: it is the Tunbridge of this part of the world, to which I was sent by the doctor's order, my ague often returning, notwithstanding the loads of bark I have taken. To say truth, I have no reason to repent my journey, though I was very unwilling to undertake it, it being forty miles, half by land and half by water; the land so stony I was almost shook to pieces, and I had the ill luck to be surprised with a storm on the lake, that if I had not been near a little port (where I passed a night in a very poor inn), the vessel must have been lost. A fair wind brought me hither next morning early. I found a very good lodging, a great deal of good company, and a village in many respects resembling Tunbridge Wells, not only in the quality of the waters, which is the same, but in the manner of the buildings, most of the houses being separate at little distances, and all built on the sides of hills, which indeed are far different from those

¹ Edward Lord Coke, only son of Thomas Earl of Leicester, married Mary, daughter of John Duke of Argyll, in the spring of 1747.—W. See note on letter to the Countess of Bute, *post*, p. 182.—T.

of Tunbridge, being six times as high : they are really vast rocks of different figures, covered with green moss, or short grass, diversified by tufts of trees, little woods, and here and there vineyards, but no other cultivation, except gardens like those on Richmond-hill. The whole lake, which is twenty-five miles long, and three broad, is all surrounded with these impassable mountains, the sides of which, towards the bottom, are so thick set with villages (and in most of them gentlemen's seats), that I do not believe there is anywhere above a mile distance one from another, which adds very much to the beauty of the prospect.

We have an opera here, which is performed three times in the week. I was at it last night, and should have been surprised at the neatness of the scenes, goodness of the voices, and justness of the actors, if I had not remembered I was in Italy. Several gentlemen jumped into the orchestra, and joined in the concert, which I suppose is one of the freedoms of the place, for I never saw it in any great town. I was yet more amazed (while the actors were dressing for the farce that concluded the entertainment) to see one of the principal among them, and as errant a *petit maître* as if he had passed all his life at Paris, mount the stage, and present us with a cantata of his own performing. He had the pleasure of being almost deafened with applause. The ball began afterwards, but I was not witness of it, having accustomed myself to such early hours, that I was half asleep before the opera finished : it begins at ten o'clock, so that it was one before I could get to bed, though I had supped before I went, which is the custom.

I am much better pleased with the diversions on the water, where all the town assembles every night, and never without music ; but we have none so rough as trumpets, kettle-drums, and French horns : they are all violins, lutes, mandolins, and flutes doux. Here is hardly a man that does not excel in some of these instruments, which he privately addresses to the lady of his affections, and the public has the advantage of it by his adding to the number of the musicians.

The fountain where we drink the waters rises between two

hanging hills, and is overshadowed with large trees, that give a freshness in the hottest time of the day. The provisions are all excellent, the fish of the lake being as large and well tasted as that of Geneva, and the mountains abounding in game, particularly blackcocks, which I never saw in any other part of Italy: but none of the amusements here would be so effectual to raising my spirits as a letter from you. I have received none since that of February 27. I do not blame you for it, but my ill fortune, that will not let me have that consolation. The newspaper informs me that the Chevalier Gray (so he is styled) is appointed minister at Venice.¹ I wish you would let me know who he is, intending to settle our correspondence through his hands. I did not care to ask that favour of Lord Holderness.²

Dear child, I am ever your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all your little ones. Direct as usual.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to London, Monday, Oct. 12th, O.S.; received at Welbeck, Thursday, Oct. 15th, O.S. 1747.]

Brescia, Sept. 1 [1747].

DEAREST MADAM,—This is the fourth letter I have wrote since I have had the honour of yours, and am in so much pain for your health, that I have little enjoyment in the recovery of my own. I am willing to flatter myself that your silence is occasioned by the irregularity of the post, which this unhappy war often interrupts: the fear of this never reaching you, puts a great damp on my writing; yet I could not be easy without endeavouring (at least) to give you my repeated

¹ Horace Walpole's aristocratic prejudice appears to have been rudely shocked by the appointment. In a letter to his friend, Sir Horace Mann, dated Jan. 28, 1754, he writes: "What weight do you think family has here when the very last minister whom we have dispatched is Sir James Gray—nay, and who has already been in a public character at Venice? His father was first a boxkeeper, and then footman to James the Second." Sir James was one of the party of diners who were popularly believed to have thrown a calf's head in a napkin out of a tavern window in Suffolk-street, on the 30th of January, 1735, as an insult to the memory of King Charles. The affair led to a riot. See letters of A. Smyth and Lord Middlesex, in Appendix to Mr. Singer's edition of Spence's Anecdotes.—T.

² Robert fourth Earl of Holderness. He was appointed in 1744 ambassador extraordinary to Venice, which place he quitted in 1746.—T.

assurances of that everlasting affection I shall always feel for your ladyship, which you so highly deserve, and have by so many obligations acquired. I have lived this eight months in the country, after the same manner (in little) that I fancy you do at Welbeck, and find so much advantage from the air and quiet of this retreat, that I do not think of leaving it. I walk and read much, but have very little company except that of a neighbouring convent. I do what good I am able in the village round me, which is a very large one; and have had so much success, that I am thought a great physician, and should be esteemed a saint if I went to mass. My house is a very convenient one, and if I could have your ladyship's dear conversation, I may truly say my life would be very comfortable: that is a melancholy thought, when I reflect on the impossibility of that happiness being obtained by (dearest madam)

Your most faithfully devoted humble servant.

Be pleased to direct to Brescia par Venise.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Brescia, Dec. 17, N.S. [1747].

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of October 14th but yesterday: the negligence of the post is very disagreeable. I have at length had a letter from Lady Oxford, by which I find mine to her has miscarried, and perhaps the answer which I have now wrote may have the same fate.

I wish you joy of your young son:¹ may he live to be a blessing to you. I find I amuse myself here in the same manner as if at London, according to your account of it; that is, I play at whist every night with some old priests that I have taught it to, and are my only companions. To say truth, the decay of my sight will no longer suffer me to read by candlelight, and the evenings are now long and dark, that I am forced to stay at home. I believe you'll be persuaded my gaming makes nobody uneasy, when I tell you that we play only a penny per corner. 'Tis now a year that I have lived wholly in the country, and have no de-

¹ James Archibald Stuart, second son of the Earl of Bute, the ancestor of Lord Wharnccliffe. He was born September 19th, 1747.—T.

sign of quitting it. I am entirely given up to rural amusements, and have forgot there are any such things as wits or fine ladies in the world. However, I am pleased to hear what happens to my acquaintance. I wish you would inform me what is become of the Pomfret family, and who Sir Francis Dashwood has married.¹ I knew him at Florence: he seemed so nice in the choice of a wife, I have some curiosity to know who it is that has had charms enough to make him enter into an engagement he used to speak of with fear and trembling.

I am ever, dear child, your most affectionate mother.

My service to Lord Bute, and blessing to my grandchildren.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Brescia, Jan. 5 [1748].

DEAR CHILD,—I am glad to hear that yourself and family are in good health; as to the alteration you say you find in the world, it is only owing to your being better acquainted with it. I have never in all my various travels seen but two sorts of people, and those very like one another; I mean men and women, who always have been, and ever will be, the same. The same vices and the same follies have been the fruit of all ages, though sometimes under different names. I remember, when I returned from Turkey, meeting with the same affectation of youth amongst my acquaintance that you now mention amongst yours, and I do not doubt but your daughter will find the same, twenty years hence, among hers. One of the greatest happinesses of youth is the ignorance of evil, though it is often the ground of great indiscretions, and sometimes the active part of life is over before an honest mind finds out how one ought to act in such a world as this. I am as much removed from it as it is possible to be on this side the grave; which is from my own inclination, for I might have even here a great deal of company; the way of living in this province being what I believe it is now in the sociable part of Scotland,

¹ He married Sarah, daughter and co-heir of Thomas Gould, Esq., of Ivor, county of Bucks, and widow of Sir Richard Ellis, Bart.—D. Horace Walpole, in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated 6th of March, 1746, speaks of "Sir Francis Dashwood's new wife, a poor forlorn Presbyterian prude."—T.

and was in England a hundred years ago. I had a visit in the beginning of these holidays of thirty horse of ladies and gentlemen, with their servants (by the way, the ladies all ride like the late Duchess of Cleveland). They came with the kind intent of staying with me at least a fortnight, though I had never seen any of them before; but they were all neighbours within ten miles round. I could not avoid entertaining them at supper, and by good luck had a large quantity of game in the house, which, with the help of my poultry, furnished out a plentiful table. I sent for the fiddles, and they were so obliging as to dance all night, and even dine with me next day, though none of them had been in bed; and were much disappointed I did not press them to stay, it being the fashion to go in troops to one another's houses, hunting and dancing together a month in each castle. I have not yet returned any of their visits, nor do not intend it of some time, to avoid this expensive hospitality. The trouble of it is not very great, they not expecting any ceremony. I left the room about one o'clock, and they continued their ball in the saloon above stairs, without being at all offended at my departure. But the greatest diversion I had was to see a lady of my own age comfortably dancing with her own husband, some years older; and I can assert that she jumps and gallops with the best of them.¹

May you always be as well satisfied with your family as you are at present, and your children return in your age the tender care you have of their infancy. I know no greater happiness that can be wished for you by your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to my grandchildren.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Loveire [February 2, N.S., 1748].

YOURS of the 1st of December, O.S., came to me this morning, February 2, N.S. I hope your health continues good, since you say nothing to the contrary. I think the

¹ Portions of this paragraph in the original are now torn off.—T.

Duchess of Manchester's silence is the most reasonable part of her conduct; complainers are seldom pitied, and boasters yet seldomer believed. Her retirement is, in my opinion, no proof either of her happiness or discontent, since her appearance in the world can never be pleasing to her, having sense enough to know 'tis impossible for her to make a good figure in it.¹ I was shown at Genoa an ode on Ch. Ch.,² as a production of Dr. Broxholme. I own I thought it much in his style, and am apt to believe (from what I know of Sir Ch. H.)³ he is more likely to have the vanity to father it, than the

¹ The Duchess of Manchester mixed very little with the world after her marriage to Mr. Hussey, one of those nine days' wonders which never fail to put all idle tongues in motion. The satirical lines of Hanbury Williams are well known :

"Sunk is her power, her sway is o'er;
She'll be no more ador'd—no more
Shine forth the public care.
Oh, what a falling off is here,
From her whose frown made wisdom fear,
Whose scorn begot despair."

Their worthless author had married a friend of hers, Lady Frances Coningsby, the only child of Lord Coningsby; and he used her as moths that fly into a candle, and as heiresses that marry rakes are pretty sure to be used. Something made him suspect the duchess of spiriting her up to resistance; a piece of hostility which he revenged by levelling at her grace the shafts of his wit, even before her extraordinary match provoked ridicule. Extraordinary it must be called; yet Mr. Hussey was a gentleman of birth and fortune; and as he descended maternally from the Duchess of Tyrconnel (Grammont's Belle Jennings, sister to the Duchess of Marlborough), he was likewise her own relation. But then she stood on the topmost height both of fashion and quality; and had ever piqued herself upon being more delicate, more fastidious, in modern cant more *exclusive*, than the finest of the fine ladies her compeers. In short, she seemed a person whom few men, and those only of the highest class in situation and talents, might dare to look up to. Therefore her accepting a wild Irishman, younger than herself, utterly unknown to all her set of company, and differing widely from them in habits and manners, did unavoidably astonish the world, and set the wicked part of it a-laughing. The laugh, however, was checked when the Irishman, who could build no rhymes, drew his sword in answer to Sir Charles Hanbury's odes; and the wit, absconding, chose to lie concealed till the storm blew over. The duchess, as it appears from Lady Mary's observations, had the wisdom to be silent about the success of her venture. But, perhaps, the act which diverted her neighbours, secured a reasonable share of happiness for herself; since her husband, without the niceties of refinement, had a warm heart and a high sense of honour, which led him to treat her affectionately; and to show a scrupulous regard to her wishes, even after decease. He was created Lord Beaulieu in 1762.—W. Other authorities give a different account of the affair with Mr. Hussey. See Works of Sir C. H. Williams, 1822. Preface, p. 9.—T.

² Charles Churchill. This probably refers to Sir Charles's verses, entitled "General Churchill's Address to Venus. Written in December, 1739;" Mr. Churchill being just then made deputy ranger of St. James's Park, under Lord Weymouth.—T.

³ Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, according to the report of those who remem-

wit to write it. I have seen heaps of his poetry, but nothing to distinguish him from the tribe of common versifiers. The last I saw was an ode addressed to Mr. Dodington on his courtship to the late D. [Duchess] of Argyll; those two you mention have never reached me. I should be very much obliged if you would send me copies of them.

The winter here begun with the last month; the snow is still on the ground in some places, but the air much softened, and we reckon the spring begun. I hear the new opera at Brescia is much applauded, and intend to see it before the end of the carnival. The people of this province are much at their ease during the miseries which the war occasions their neighbours, and employ all their time in diversions.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Feb. 3, N.S. [1748].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I return you thanks for the news you send me. I am always amused with changes and chances that happen amongst my acquaintance. I pity the Duchess of Devonshire, and admire the greatness of mind that makes her refuse an addition to her own estate; but am surprised she can relinquish the care of her children, who are yet unsettled. Lady Thanet's behaviour has always been without any regard to public censure; but I am ever astonished (though I have frequently seen it) that women can so far renounce all decency, as to endeavour to expose a man whose name they bear. Lady Burlington¹ has made a lucky choice for her daughter. I am well acquainted with Lord Hartington,² and I do not know any man so fitted to make a wife happy: with so great a vocation for matrimony, that I verily believe, if it had not been established before his time, he would have had the glory of the invention.

bered him, was so pompous and heavy in conversation, that some time passed before the world could believe him the author of such lively and spirited verses as the "Satires on Sir Robert Walpole's Successors," &c. &c.—W.

¹ Lady Burlington was a sister of Lady Thanet.—T.

² William Lord Hartington, afterwards fourth Duke of Devonshire, was married to Charlotte, daughter and sole heiress of Richard Earl of Burlington, on the 28th of March, 1748.—T.

I hear the carnival is very bright at Brescia. I have not yet been to partake of it, but I intend to go to the opera, which I hear much commended. Some ladies in the neighbourhood favoured me last week with a visit in masquerade. They were all dressed in white like vestal virgins, with garlands in their hands. They came at night with violins and flambeaux, but did not stay more than one dance; pursuing their way to another castle some miles from hence. I suppose you are now in London; wherever you are you have the good wishes of

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to my grandchildren.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Brescia,¹ April 24, N.S. [1748].

I RETURN you many thanks for yours of March 21, in which were the copies of Sr Ch. H.'s [Sir Charles Hanbury Williams's] poetry, which extremely entertained me. I find tar-water² succeeded to Ward's drop.³ 'Tis possible, by this time, that some other quackery has taken place of that; the English are easier than any other nation infatuated by the prospect of universal medicines, nor is there any country in the world where the doctors raise such immense fortunes. I attribute it to the fund of credulity which is in all mankind. We have no longer faith in miracles and relics, and therefore with the same fury run after recipes and physicians. The same money which three hundred years ago was given for the health of the soul is now given for the health of the body, and by the same sort of people—women and half-witted men. In the countries where they have shrines and images, quacks are

¹ This and the following letter were probably written from Lovere. Lady Mary explains in another letter that she was in the habit of dating from Brescia when not actually residing there—that being the post town.—T.

² The history of the once fashionable panacea, tar-water, whose virtues were unfolded in Bishop Berkeley's "Siris," is well known. The remark in the text was no doubt suggested by Sir Charles Hanbury Williams's "Tar-water, a Ballad, inscribed to the Right Honourable Philip Earl of Chesterfield."—T.

³ Ward and his drop were patronised by Queen Caroline, and therefore did not, of course, lack believers less eminent. Ward amassed a large fortune, with which he retired to Italy.—T.

despised, and monks and confessors find their account in managing the fear and hope which rule the actions of the multitude.

I should be extremely pleased if I could entirely depend on Lord Sandwich's account of our son. As I am wholly unacquainted with him; I cannot judge how far he may be either deceived or interested. I know my son (if not much altered) is capable of giving bonds for more than he will ever be worth in the view of any present advantage. Lord Bute and my daughter's conduct may be owing to the advice of the D. of Argyll. It was a maxim of Sir R. Walpole's that whoever expected advancement should appear much in public. He used to say, whoever neglected the world would be neglected by it, though I believe more families have been ruined than raised by that method.

If I was not afraid of tiring you with the length of my letter, I would give you the history of an Irish conquest at Avignon, more extraordinary, all circumstances considered, than Mr. Hussey's, the irresistible lover being some years past threescore. I own the vexation of that foolish adventure gave the finishing stroke to my dislike of that town, having a real kindness for the young lady that flung herself away. She was daughter to Mr. Carter, whom I think you knew, a relation of Lady Bellasis.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to London, May 21st, O.S., Saturday; received at Welbeck, 23rd, O.S., Monday.]

Brescia, April 27, N.S. [1748].

DEAREST MADAM,—It is so long since I have had the happiness of hearing from you, I cannot forbear writing, though perhaps this letter may have the same fate of those that have preceded it. I received one from my daughter but a few days ago, that was dated in September: Mr. Wortley writes me word that she has changed her retired way of life, and is much in public; I wish it may be to her advantage. I hope the Duchess of Portland and her family continue in perfect

health; I do not fear your ladyship's receiving any trouble from her, if she gives you none by her sickness. The real part I take in everything that concerns you, gives me a share in every branch of your prosperity; I have a pleasure in all your improvements at Welbeck, when I hear them commended, though I shall never see them: 'tis almost the only attachment I have in this world, being every day (as it is fit I should) more and more weaned from it. I hope your silence is only occasioned by the irregularity of the post, which I cannot expect to see reformed while the war continues. Notwithstanding my indifference for other things, your friendship and health will ever be tenderly dear to, madam,

Your ladyship's most faithful obedient servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 10, N.S. [1748].

I GIVE you thanks, dear child, for your entertaining account of your present diversions. I find the public calamities have no influence on the pleasures of the town. I remember very well the play of the *Revenge*,¹ having been once acquainted with a party that intended to represent it (not one of which is now alive). I wish you had told me who acted the principal parts. I suppose Lord Bute was Alonzo, by the magnificence of his dress.² I think they have mended their choice in the *Orphan*: I saw it played at Westminster school, where Lord Erskine was Monimia, and then one of the most beautiful figures that could be seen. I have had here (in low life) some amusements of the same sort. I believe I wrote

¹ Young's tragedy, performed for the first time in April, 1721.—T.

² Lord Chesterfield, in his "Character" of Lord Bute, thus alludes to his passion for private dramatic performances: "He was the intendant of balls, the Coryphæus of plays, in which he acted himself, and so grew into a sort of favourite of that merry prince." [Frederick Prince of Wales.] So Horace Walpole remarks, in his usual contemptuous way: "The Earl of Bute, a Scotchman, who having no estates had passed his youth in studying mathematics and mechanics in his own little island, then simples in the hedges about Twickenham, and at five-and-thirty had fallen in love with his own figure, which he produced at masquerades in becoming dresses, and in plays which he acted in private with a set of his own relations."—*Memoirs of the Reign of King George II.* From the words "at five-and-thirty," this appears to refer to the very period at which this letter is presumed to have been written. Lord Bute was born about 1713.—T.

you word I intended to go to the opera at Brescia; but the weather being cold, and the roads bad, prevented my journey; and the people of this village (which is the largest I know: the curate tells me he has two thousand communicants) presented me a petition for leave to erect a theatre in my saloon. This house has stood empty many years before I took it, and they were accustomed to turn the stables into a playhouse every carnival: it is now occupied by my horses, and they had no other place proper for a stage. I easily complied with their request, and was surprised at the beauty of their scenes, which, though painted by a country painter, are better coloured, and the perspective better managed, than in any of the second-rate theatres in London. I liked it so well, it is not yet pulled down. The performance was yet more surprising, the actors being all peasants; but the Italians have so natural a genius for comedy, they acted as well as if they had been brought up to nothing else, particularly the Arlequin, who far surpassed any of our English, though only the tailor of the village, and I am assured never saw a play in any other place. It is a pity they have not better poets, the pieces being not at all superior to our drolls. The music, habits, and illumination were at the expense of the parish, and the whole entertainment, which lasted the three last days of the carnival, cost me only a barrel of wine, which I gave the actors, and is not so dear as small beer in London. At present, as the old song says,

“ All my whole care
Is my farming affair,
To make my corn grow, and my apple-trees bear.”

My improvements give me great pleasure, and so much profit, that if I could live a hundred years longer, I should certainly provide for all my grandchildren: but, alas! as the Italians say, *h'o sonato vîngt & quatro 'ora*:¹ and it is not long I must expect to write myself your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to your little ones.

¹ So written in the original.—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[July 10, 1748.]

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of May the 12th but yesterday, July the 9th. I am surprised you complain of my silence. I have never failed answering yours the post after I received them; but I fear, being directed to Twickenham (having no other direction from you), your servants there may have neglected them.

I have been these six weeks, and still am, at my dairy-house, which joins to my garden. I believe I have already told you it is a long mile from the castle,¹ which is situate in the midst of a very large village, once a considerable town, part of the walls still remaining, and has not vacant ground enough about it to make a garden, which is my greatest amusement, it being now troublesome to walk, or even go in the chaise till the evening. I have fitted up in this farm-house a room for myself—that is to say, strewn the floor with rushes, covered the chimney with moss and branches, and adorned the room with basins of earthenware (which is made here to great perfection) filled with flowers, and put in some straw chairs, and a couch bed, which is my whole furniture. This spot of ground is so beautiful, I am afraid you will scarce credit the description, which, however, I can assure you, shall be very literal, without any embellishment from imagination. It is on a bank, forming a kind of peninsula, raised from the river Oglio fifty feet, to which you may descend by easy stairs cut in the turf, and either take the air on the river, which is as large as the Thames at Richmond, or by walking [in] an avenue two hundred yards on the side of it, you find a wood of a hundred acres, which was all ready cut into walks and ridings when I took it. I have only added fifteen bowers in different views, with seats of turf. They were easily made, here being a large quantity of underwood, and a great number of wild vines, which twist to the top of the highest trees, and from

¹ By the "castle," Lady Mary means the "château," or "shell of a palace," in which she lived, and which she bought soon afterwards. See letter to Lady Oxford of November 29 [1748], *post*, p. 171.—T.

which they make a very good sort of wine they call *brusco*. I am now writing to you in one of these arbours, which is so thickly shaded, the sun is not troublesome, even at noon. Another is on the side of the river, where I have made a camp kitchen, that I may take the fish, dress, and eat it immediately, and at the same time see the barks, which ascend or descend every day to or from Mantua, Guastalla, or Pont de Vie, all considerable towns. This little wood is carpeted, in their succeeding seasons, with violets and strawberries, inhabited by a nation of nightingales, and filled with game of all kinds, excepting deer and wild boar, the first being unknown here, and not being large enough for the other.

My garden was a plain vineyard when it came into my hands not two years ago, and it is, with a small expense, turned into a garden that (apart from the advantage of the climate) I like better than that of Kensington. The Italian vineyards are not planted like those in France, but in clumps, fastened to trees planted in equal ranks (commonly fruit-trees), and continued in festoons from one to another, which I have turned into covered galleries of shade, that I can walk in the heat without being incommoded by it. I have made a dining-room of verdure, capable of holding a table of twenty covers; the whole ground is three hundred and seventeen feet in length, and two hundred in breadth. You see it is far from large; but so prettily disposed (though I say it), that I never saw a more agreeable rustic garden, abounding with all sort of fruit, and produces a variety of wines. I would send you a piece [*sic*] if I did not fear the customs would make you pay too dear for it. I believe my description gives you but an imperfect idea of my garden. Perhaps I shall succeed better in describing my manner of life, which is as regular as that of any monastery. I generally rise at six, and as soon as I have breakfasted, put myself at the head of my weeder [*sic*] women and work with them till nine. I then inspect my dairy, and take a turn among my poultry, which is a very large inquiry. I have, at present, two hundred chickens, besides turkeys, geese, ducks, and peacocks. All things have hitherto

prospered under my care ; my bees and silkworms are doubled, and I am told that, without accidents, my capital will be so in two years' time. At eleven o'clock I retire to my books : I dare not indulge myself in that pleasure above an hour. At twelve I constantly dine, and sleep after dinner till about three. I then send for some of my old priests, and either play at piquet or whist, till 'tis cool enough to go out. One evening I walk in my wood, where I often sup, take the air on horseback the next, and go on the water the third. The fishery of this part of the river belongs to me ; and my fisherman's little boat (where I have a green lutestring awning) serves me for a barge. He and his son are my rowers without any expense, he being very well paid by the profit of the fish, which I give him on condition of having every day one dish for my table. Here is plenty of every sort of fresh-water fish (excepting salmon) ; but we have a large trout so like it, that I, that have almost forgot the taste, do not distinguish it.

We are both placed properly in regard to our different times of life : you amidst the fair, the gallant, and the gay ; I in a retreat, where I enjoy every amusement that solitude can afford. I confess I sometimes wish for a little conversation ; but I reflect that the commerce of the world gives more uneasiness than pleasure, and quiet is all the hope that can reasonably be indulged at my age. My letter is of an unconscionable length ; I should ask your pardon for it, but I had a mind to give you an idea of my passing my time,—take it as an instance of the affection of, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all my grandchildren.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

July 17, N.S. [1748].

YOURS of June 7, O.S., came to my hands but yesterday. I am very much vexed and surprised at the miscarriage of my letters. I have never failed answering both yours and my daughter's the very next post after I received them. I begin

to suspect my servants put the franking money in their pockets, and threw away the letters. I have been in the country this year and half, though I continued to date from Brescia, as the place to which I would have directed, being, though not the nearest, the safest post town: I send all my packets thither, and will for the future enclose them to a banker there, who I hope will be more careful in the forwarding them.

I am glad my daughter's conduct justifies the opinion I always had of her understanding: I do not wonder at her being well received in sets of company different from one another, having myself preserved a long intimacy with the Duchesses of Marlborough and Montagu, though they were at open war, and perpetually talking of their complaints. I believe they were both sensible I never betrayed either; each of them giving me the strongest proofs of confidence in the last conversations I had with them, which were the last I had in England. What I think extraordinary is my daughter's continuing so many years agreeable to Lord Bute; Mr. Mackenzie telling me, the last time I saw him, that his brother frequently said among his companions, that he was still as much in love with his wife as before he married her. If the princess's favour lasts, it may be of use to her family. I have often been dubious if the seeming indifference of her highness's behaviour was owing to very good sense, or great insensibility: should it be the first, she will get the better of all her rivals, and probably one day have a large share of power.

I send you my son's letter and a copy of my answer to it. I should be glad to hear you approved it.

I am very much pleased that you accustom yourself to tea, being persuaded that the moderate use of it is generally wholesome. I have planted a great deal in my garden, which is a fashion lately introduced in this country, and has succeeded very well. I cannot say it is as strong as the Indian, but [it] has the advantage of being fresher, and at least un-mixed.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Dairy-house, July 26, N.S. [1748].

I AM really as fond of my garden as a young author of his first play, when it has been well received by the town, and can no more forbear teasing my acquaintance for their approbation: though I gave you a long account of it in my last, I must tell you I have made two little terraces, raised twelve steps each, at the end of my great walk; they are just finished, and a great addition to the beauty of my garden. I enclose to you a rough draft of it,¹ drawn (or more properly scrawled) by my own hand, without the assistance of rule or compasses, as you will easily perceive. I have mixed in my espaliers as many rose and jessamine trees as I can cram in; and in the squares designed for the use of the kitchen, have avoided putting anything disagreeable either to sight or smell, having another garden below for cabbage, onions, garlic, &c. All the walks are garnished with beds of flowers, beside the parterres, which are for a more distinguished sort. I have neither brick nor stone walls: all my fence is a high hedge, mingled with trees; but fruit [is] so plenty in this country, nobody thinks it worth stealing. Gardening is certainly the next amusement to reading; and as my sight will now permit me little of that, I am glad to form a taste that can give me so much employment, and be the plaything of my age, now my pen and needle are almost useless to me.

I am very glad you are admitted into the conversation of the P. [Prince] and Ps. [Princess]:² it is a favour that you ought to cultivate for the good of the family, which is now numerous, and it may one day be of great advantage. I think Lord Bute much in the right to endeavour the continuance of it; and it would be imprudent in you to neglect what may be of great use to your children. I pray God bless both you and them: it is the daily prayer of your most affectionate mother.

¹ A sketch of the house accompanies the original of this letter.—T.

² Frederick Prince of Wales and his wife, the parents of George the Third.—T.

Now the sea is open,¹ we may send packets to one another. I wish you would send me Campbell's book of prints of the English houses,² and that Lord Bute would be so good to choose me the best book of practical gardening extant.

I shall trouble you with some more commissions; but insist on it that you would take from Child whatever money they may come to. If [you] consign them to the English consul at Venice directed to me, they will come very safe.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[About September, 1748.]

IT is very true, my dear child, we cannot now maintain a family with the product of a flock, though I do not doubt the present sheep afford as much wool and milk as any of their ancestors, and it is certain our natural wants are not more numerous than formerly; but the world is past its infancy, and will no longer be contented with spoon meat. Time has added great improvements, but those very improvements have introduced a train of artificial necessities. A collective body of men make a gradual progress in understanding, like that of a single individual. When I reflect on the vast increase of useful, as well as speculative, knowledge the last three hundred years has produced, and that the peasants of this age have more conveniences than the first emperors of Rome had any notion of, I imagine we are now arrived at that period which answers to fifteen. I cannot think we are older, when I recollect the many palpable follies which are still (almost) universally persisted in: I place that of war amongst the most glaring, being fully as senseless as the boxing of schoolboys, and whenever we come to man's estate (perhaps a thousand years hence), I do not doubt it will appear as ridiculous as the pranks of unlucky lads. Several discoveries will then be made, and several truths made clear, of which we have now no more idea than the ancients had of the circulation of the blood, or the optics of Sir I. Newton.

You will believe me in a very dull humour when I fill my

¹ The preliminaries of peace of France and Spain were signed at Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748. Lady Mary's son was appointed secretary to the embassy.—T.

² Vitruvius Britannicus.—D.

letter with such whims, and indeed so I am. I have just received the news of Sir J. Gray's departure, and am exceedingly vexed I did not know of his designed journey. I suppose he would have carried my token;¹ and now I utterly despair of an opportunity of sending it, and therefore enclose a note on Child for the value of it.

When you see Lady Rich, pray do not fail to present my thanks and compliments. I desire the same to everybody that thinks it worth while to inquire after me. You mention a Colonel Rich as her son; I thought he had been killed in Scotland. You see my entire ignorance of all English affairs, and consequently, whatever you tell me of my acquaintance, has the merit of novelty to me, who correspond with nobody but yourself and Lady Oxford, whose retirement and ill health does not permit her to send me much news.

I expect a letter of thanks from my granddaughter: I wrote to my grandmother long before her age. I desire you would not see it, being willing to judge of her genius. I know I shall read it with some partiality, which I cannot avoid to all that is yours, as I am your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Came to London, Jan. 18th, O.S., Monday; received at Welbeck, Jan. 21st, Thursday.]

Nov. 29, N.S. [1748].

DEAREST MADAM,—I received yesterday the most sensible pleasure, by your obliging letter: it is impossible to tell you what joy the sight of your ladyship's hand gave me, which was very much heightened by the account of your health and continued goodness to me. I believe the air you are in is the best in England, and I do not doubt but the tranquillity and regularity of your life will re-establish your constitution, which is naturally a very good one, and only hurt by melancholy reflections, which I hope you will never more have any occasion for. It is no diminution of the Duchess of Portland's merit, to say you deserve whatever affection she can pay,

¹ Lady Mary sent a present annually to one of her grandchildren.—D.

since those who do their duty can never be too much valued : I sincerely share in the satisfaction you have in seeing that she performs hers to you, it is the clearest proof of her good sense and good mind : may you long be happy in one another ! I am glad my daughter enjoys her conversation, which is in every sense an honour and advantage.

I have bought the house I live in, which, I suppose, you will imagine little better than a house of office when I talk of my purchasing, and indeed it has cost me little more than the price of one ; but, to say truth, it is not much more than the shell of a palace, which was built not above forty years ago, but the master of it dying before it was quite finished, and falling into hands that had many others, it has been wholly neglected ; but being well built, the walls are perfectly sound, and I amuse myself in fitting it up. I will take the liberty of sending your ladyship a plan of it, which is far from magnificent, but I believe you will be of my opinion, that it is one of the most convenient you ever saw. The owners of it looking upon it as only an expense to them, were pleased to part with it for a trifle. I won't make you any excuses for troubling you with this long account of my little affairs ; your friendship and good nature, I know, gives you a concern in all that regards your ladyship's

Ever faithful and affectionate humble servant.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Dec. 25, N.S. [1748].

I HOPE I have now regulated our correspondence in a manner more safe than by Holland. I have sent a large collection of letters to you and my daughter, which have all miscarried ; neither have I had one line from either of some months.

I am now assured by one of the principal merchants here, that all those directed to Signor Isaac M. de Treves, à Venezia, shall be carefully remitted, and I beg you would make use of that direction.

I was surprised not many days ago by a very extraordinary

visit: it was from the Duchess of Guastalla, who you know is a princess of the house d'Armstadt, and reported to be near marriage with the King of Sardinia. I confess it was an honour I could easily have spared, she coming attended with the greatest part of her court; her grand-master, who is brother to Cardinal Valenti, the first lady of her bed-chamber, four pages, and a long et cetera of inferior servants, besides her guards. She entered with an easy French air, and told me, since I would not oblige her by coming to her court, she was resolved to come to me, and eat a salad of my raising, having heard much fame of my gardening. You may imagine I gave her as good a supper as I could. She was (or seemed to be) extremely pleased with an English sack-posset of my ordering. I owned to her freely that my house was much at her service, but it was impossible for me to find beds for all her suite. She said she intended to return when the moon rose, which was an hour after midnight. In the mean time I sent for the violins to entertain her attendants, who were very well pleased to dance, while she and her grand-master and I played at piquet. She pressed me extremely to return with her to her jointure-house, where she now resides (all the furniture of Guastalla being sold). I excused myself on not daring to venture in the cold night fifteen miles, but promised I would not fail to pay her my acknowledgments for the great honour her highness had done me, in a very short time, and we parted very good friends. She said she intended this spring to retire into her native country. I did not take the liberty of mentioning to her the report of her being in treaty with the King of Sardinia, though it has been in the newspaper of Mantua; but I found an opportunity of hinting it to Signor Gonzagna, her grand-master, who told me the duchess would not have been pleased to talk of it, since, perhaps, there was nothing in it more than a friendship that had long been between them, and since her widowhood the king sends her an express every day.

I believe you'll wish this long story much shorter; but I think you seemed to desire me to lengthen my letters, and I can have no greater pleasure than endeavouring to amuse you.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Received at Welbeck, Monday, Feb. 27th, 1748, O.S.]

[Feb. 2, N.S., 1749.¹]

DEAREST MADAM,—I received this day, the 2nd of February, N.S., the happiness of your ladyship's obliging letter of December 17th; it has relieved me from the great anxiety I was under in regard to your health. I have ever done you the justice (during this long interruption of our correspondence) of being persuaded you was incapable of forgetting me; or if sometimes my melancholy, joined with a consciousness of my own unworthiness, suggested to me a contrary thought, I presently corrected it, as not suited to that esteem you so well deserve from me. I hope the good air of Welbeck has entirely re-established your health; I should be ungrateful to Heaven to complain of mine, which is indeed better than I have reason to expect. I walk very much, I sometimes ride, I amuse myself with a little garden that I have made out of a vineyard; and if I could enjoy your ladyship's conversation, I should not regret a world in which I never had great pleasure, and have so little inclination to return to, that I do not even intend to see the new court which is expected at Parma, though it is but ten miles from hence.

Dearest madam, continue to me the honour of writing to me, and be assured that you can bestow your favours on no person who is more sensible of their value than

Your ladyship's most faithfully devoted humble servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Feb. 19, N.S. [1749].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I gave you some general thoughts on the education of your children in my last letter; but fearing you should think I neglected your request, by answering it with too much conciseness, I am resolved to add to it what little I know on that subject, and which may perhaps be useful to you in a concern with which you seem so nearly affected.

People commonly educate their children as they build their houses, according to some plan they think beautiful, without

¹ This is evidently the true date. Lady Oxford, in her memorandum, dates according to the ecclesiastical year.—T.

considering whether it is suited to the purposes for which they are designed. Almost all girls of quality are educated as if they were to be great ladies, which is often as little to be expected, as an immoderate heat of the sun in the north of Scotland. You should teach yours to confine their desires to probabilities, to be as useful as is possible to themselves, and to think privacy (as it is) the happiest state of life. I do not doubt your giving them all the instructions necessary to form them to a virtuous life; but 'tis a fatal mistake to do this without proper restrictions. Vices are often hid under the name of virtues, and the practice of them followed by the worst of consequences. Sincerity, friendship, piety, disinterestedness, and generosity, are all great virtues; but, pursued without discretion, become criminal. I have seen ladies indulge their own ill humour by being very rude and impertinent, and think they deserved approbation by saying I love to speak truth. One of your acquaintance made a ball the next day after her mother died, to show she was sincere. I believe your own reflection will furnish you with but too many examples of the ill effects of the rest of the sentiments I have mentioned, when too warmly embraced. They are generally recommended to young people without limits or distinction, and this prejudice hurries them into great misfortunes, while they are applauding themselves in the noble practice (as they fancy) of very eminent virtues.

I cannot help adding (out of my real affection to you), I wish you would moderate that fondness you have for your children. I do not mean you should abate any part of your care, or not do your duty to them in its utmost extent: but I would have you early prepare yourself for disappointments, which are heavy in proportion to their being surprising. It is hardly possible, in such a number, that none should be unhappy; prepare yourself against a misfortune of that kind. I confess there is hardly any more difficult to support; yet it is certain imagination has a great share in the pain of it, and it is more in our power than it is commonly believed to soften whatever ills are founded or augmented by fancy. Strictly speaking, there is but one real evil—I mean, acute pain; all other com-

plaints are so considerably diminished by time, that it is plain the grief is owing to our passion, since the sensation of it vanishes when that is over.

There is another mistake, I forgot to mention, usual in mothers: if any of their daughters are beauties, they take great pains to persuade them that they are ugly, or at least that they think so, which the young woman never fails to believe springs from envy, and is perhaps not much in the wrong. I would, if possible, give them a just notion of their figure, and show them how far it is valuable. Every advantage has its price, and may be either over or undervalued. It is the common doctrine of (what are called) good books, to inspire a contempt of beauty, riches, greatness, &c., which has done as much mischief among the young of our sex as an over eager desire of them. They should not look on these things as blessings where they are bestowed, though not necessities that it is impossible to be happy without. I am persuaded the ruin of Lady F. [Frances] M. [Meadows]¹ was in great measure owing to the notions given her by the silly good people that had the care of her. 'Tis true, her circumstances and your daughters' are very different: they should be taught to be content with privacy, and yet not neglect good fortune, if it should be offered them.

I am afraid, I have tired you with my instructions. I do not give them as believing my age has furnished me with superior wisdom, but in compliance with your desire, and being fond of every opportunity that gives a proof of the tenderness with which I am ever

Your affectionate mother.

¹ Lady Frances Pierrepont, Lady Mary's niece. She married in April, 1734, Philip, third son of Sir Philip Meadows. *Mrs. Pendaves, in a letter to Mrs. Ann Granville*, dated April 27, 1734, gives the following account of her elopement: "The piece of news talked of is Lady Fanny Pierrepont's walking off with Mr. Meadows at last. I was at the opera at Lincoln's Inn last Tuesday. She was there (she was of age the day before), and Mr. Meadows sat at some distance from her in the box before me. At the end of the first act she went out under pretence of being sick. A young lady, Miss Wortley, daughter of Lady Mary, went out with her, and returned in a quarter of an hour. Mr. Meadows staid some time, and then marched off. Most people guessed what they were about, but dull I, who minded the music, made no reflexion on what passed, but next day it was published. I own I think she was in the right to marry him, if she could not live without a husband, for nobody else would have cared for her, notwithstanding her twenty thousand pounds."—*Autobiog. and Corresp. of Mrs. Delany*.—T.

I should be glad if you sent me the third volume of [Campbell's] Architecture, and with it any other entertaining books. I have seen the Ds. of Ms. [Marlborough's] Memoirs, but should be glad of the "Apology for a late Resignation."¹ As to the ale, 'tis now so late in the year, it is impossible it should come good. You do not mention your father; my last letter from him told me he intended soon for England. I am afraid several of mine to him have miscarried, though directed as he ordered. I have asked you so often the price of raw silk, that I am weary of repeating it. However, I once more beg that you would send me that information.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

March 6, N.S. [1749].

I RECEIVED yours of January 23rd this morning with more satisfaction than I can express, having been long in pain for your silence. I never had that you mention of December 12th, nor any other since the month of August; though I have wrote six letters since that time, which convinces me that there is no other safe method of corresponding but through the hands of a banker at Venice, and therefore beg of you to continue to direct in the same manner as your last. It will be a few days later and with a little more expense; but I hope to receive them more punctually, and there is nothing I would not pay for that pleasure. I am very glad my daughter is safely delivered. I did not so much as know she was with child, having not heard from her of many months. I do not question she has sent many letters; but I have been so unfortunate to receive none of them. I suppose mine to her (which have been very long and frequent) have also miscarried.

We have hitherto had no winter, to the great sorrow of the people here, who are in fear of wanting ice in the summer,

¹ Lord Chesterfield resigned the seals in February, 1747, and soon afterwards published an anonymous pamphlet, entitled "An Apology for a late Resignation," which is the publication to which Lady Mary refers. Horace Walpole says: "It was supposed to be drawn up by Lord Marchmont under his direction, and was very well written; but to my Lord Chesterfield's great surprise neither his book, nor his retirement, produced the least consequence."—*Memoirs of the Reign of King George II.*, i. 51.—T.

which is as necessary as bread. They also attribute a malignant fever, which has carried off great numbers in the neighbouring towns, to the uncommon warmth of the air. It has not infected this village, which they say has ever been free from any contagious distemper. It is very remarkable that when the disease amongst the cattle raged with great violence all round, not one died or sickened here. The method of treating the physician in this country, I think, should be the same everywhere: they make it his interest that the whole parish should be in good health, giving him a stated pension, which is collected by a tax on every house, on condition he neither demands nor receives any fees, nor even refuses a visit either to rich or poor. This last article would be very hard, if we had as many vapourish ladies as in England; but those imaginary ills are entirely unknown here. When I recollect the vast fortunes raised by doctors amongst us, and the eager pursuit after every new piece of quackery that is introduced, I cannot help thinking that there is a fund of credulity in mankind that must be employed somewhere, and the money formerly given to monks for the health of the soul, is now thrown to doctors for health of the body, and generally with as little real prospect of success.

I suppose the Sir Charles Wyndham you mention is younger son of Sir William. I think I have heard the eldest named John, who had no very good character.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Gotolengo¹] April 24, N.S. [1749].

C. Mutius Sex: F.

P. Papilius M: F.

Q. Mutius P. F.

M. Cornelius P. F.

II II vir. Turrin Ex D D.

Ad augendam Locavêr[e].

Idemque Probavêre.

THIS is a very fair inscription, in large characters, on a large stone found in the pavement of the old church, and makes now a part of the wall of the new one, which is now

¹ Gotolengo is a small town ten or fifteen miles south of Brescia.—W.

building. The people here, who are as ignorant as their oxen, and live like them on the product of their land, without any curiosity for the history of it, would infer from thence that this town is of Roman foundation, though the walls, which are yet the greatest part standing (only the towers and battlements demolished), are very plainly Gothic, and not one brick to be found anywhere of Roman fabric, which is very easily distinguished. I can easily believe their tradition, that the old church, which was pulled down two years ago, being ready to drop, was a pagan temple, and do not doubt it was a considerable town, founded by the Goths, when they overran Italy. The fortifications were strong for that age: the ditch still remaining without the walls being very broad and deep, in which ran the little river that is now before my house, and the moat turned into gardens for the use of the town, the name of which being Gotolengo, is a confirmation of my conjecture. The castle, which certainly stood on the spot where my house now does, being on an eminence in the midst of the town, was probably destroyed by fire. When I ordered the court to be levelled, which was grown uneven by long neglect, there was found such quantities of burnt bricks, that plainly showed the remains of a considerable fire; but whether by the enemy, or accidental, I could get no information. They have no records, or parish books, beyond the time of their coming under the Venetian dominion, which is not much above three hundred years ago, at which time they were, as they now are, a large village, being two miles in circuit, and contains [*sic*] at present (as the curate told me) two thousand communicants. The ladies of this neighbourhood that had given themselves the trouble and expense of going to see Don Philip's entry into Parma,¹ are returned, according to the French saying, *avec un pied de nez*. As they had none of them ever seen a court before, they had figured to themselves prodigious scenes of gallantry and magnificence.

If I did not write by the post, I would tell you several particulars that I believe would make you laugh. He is retired

¹ Don Philip made his entry into Parma in March, 1749.—T.

into the country till the arrival of his princess, who is expected in May next. I take the liberty of enclosing this to Lord Bute, not knowing where to direct to him in London.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Received at Welbeck, Monday, June 5th, 1749, O.S.]

April 26, N.S. [1749].

DEAREST MADAM,—Though I have received the happiness of yours of the 25th of January very late, it being now the 26th of April, yet it gave me so much pleasure by the assurance of your health and continued goodness to me, that I can scarce complain of the delay. My letters have no value but as coming from a heart sincerely yours, truly grateful and sensible of your merit. I have had some fits of an ague this spring, which distemper has been epidemical in this country from the uncommon rains we have had; I am now very well recovered, though I have not yet ventured out of the house, the weather being still wet and raw. I believe it will be safest to send the letters your ladyship honours me with in a cover to Signor Isaac M. de Treves, à Venise. I hope your flourishing family still continues in perfect health and prosperity; I hear mine increases every year, and that my daughter is much distinguished by her royal highness:¹ I flatter myself that she is always happy in the Duchess of Portland's friendship, which I look upon as the greatest advantage that she can enjoy in this world. I am entirely a stranger to all other news in England: there is none in which I am so much interested as that of your health, of which I beg to hear often; being ever (dearest madam) with the tenderest affection,

Your ladyship's most faithful devoted servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 7, N.S. [1749].

DEAR CHILD,—I have already wished you joy of your new

¹ The Princess of Wales, mother of George III.—W.

daughter,¹ and wrote to Lord Bute to thank him for his letter. I don't know whether I shall make my court to you in saying it, but I own I cannot help thinking that your family is numerous enough, and that the education and disposal of four girls is employment for a whole life. I remain in a retirement, where my amusements are confined to my garden and dairy: however, I should be glad to know, now and then, what is doing among my acquaintance at London, and beg you would inquire of the price raw silk bears. I have asked this question very often, but suppose my letters have miscarried, having never had any answer. Your father has been so obliging to promise me some ale; if you would send, at the same time, Colin Campbell's books of Architecture, consigned to Signor Isaac M. de Treves, it would come safe to me. I imagine the D. [Duke] of Kingston is now building. I was told he intended it on the same ground where the last house stood, which I think an ill fancy, being the lowest part of the park, and he might choose others with a prospect more agreeable, which is, in my opinion, the first thing to be considered in a country seat. I have given you a large description of that of my dairy-house, which is the most beautiful of any in this province; if I knew it was lost, I would repeat it.

This letter is so dull I am ashamed to set my name to it.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 27, N.S. [1749].

DEAR CHILD,—I had the pleasure of your letter two days ago, in which you tell me of the marriage of Mr. Mackenzie,² which I was extremely glad to hear, wishing him happiness, who I think so well deserves it, from an uncommon share of honour and good nature, of which even his indiscretions are proofs. The Duchess of Argyll has acted, in my opinion,

¹ Lady Bute's fourth daughter, Lady Augusta Stuart, was born in February, 1749.—T.

² James Stuart Mackenzie, only brother of John Earl of Bute, married Lady Betty Campbell, second daughter of John Duke of Argyll. He died the 6th of April, 1800.—D.

with equal generosity and prudence: her ill success, in the disposal of Lady M.,¹ has shown her the mistake of interested matches, which are generally unfortunate. This spring has been very melancholy to me, having been tormented with a quotidian ague, of which I am scarcely recovered; and my woman, who is the most necessary servant in my family, still afflicted with a tertian, which puts my whole house in disorder, and hinders my removal to my dairy, to my great mortification, now the heats are begun. If my garden and my house stood together, I would not change this seat for Lord Tilney's or the Marquis of Rockingham's; but, alas! they are some miles asunder.

Your new fashioned game of brag was the genteel amusement when I was a girl; crimp succeeded to that, and basset and hazard employed the town when I left it to go to Constantinople. At my return, I found them all at commerce, which gave place to quadrille, and that to whist; but the rage of play has been ever the same, and will ever be so among the idle of both sexes. It is the same in every great town, and I think more particularly all over France. Here is a young man of quality, one mile from hence, just of age (which is nineteen through all the Venetian state), who lost last carnival, at Brescia, ten thousand pounds, being all the money his guardians had laid up in his minority; and, as his estate is entailed, he cannot raise one farthing on it, and is now a sort of prisoner in his castle, where he lives upon rapine—I mean running in debt to poor people, who perhaps he will never be able to pay. I am afraid you are tired with this insignificant letter; we old women love tattling; you must forgive the infirmities of your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute and blessing to all yours.

¹ Alluding to Lady Mary Campbell, youngest daughter of John second Duke of Argyll, celebrated for her beauty and her long widowhood. She married Edward Viscount Coke. Her quarrels with her husband at this time were notorious. Horace Walpole says: "She has made him a declaration in form that she hates him, that she always did, and that she always will. This seems to have been a very unnecessary notification. However, as you know his part is to be extremely in love, he is very miserable upon it."—T.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[July 14, 1749.]

I RECEIVED yours of May 29th this day, July 14, N.S. I have never failed answering every one that has come to my hands, the same post, or the immediate succeeding one. I do not doubt the interruption in our correspondence is often occasioned by the negligence or infidelity of my messengers, but your last came to me opened, with the mark of the Sanità, which shows me that the Venetians are at present under a real or pretended fear of some contagious distemper; but I have heard of no such thing. There are often quarantines got up on disputes with the neighbouring states, especially in the time of the fairs. I am sorry I have given you so much trouble on the account of the ale. Since you are not of opinion it will come good, if it is not yet sent, I beg you to let it alone. I am far more solicitous for Lord Bolingbroke's book.¹ All the writings I have ever seen of his appeared to me copied from the French eloquence. I mean a poor or trite thought dressed in pompous language. I wish I could write as you desire on better paper; but this is the best to be had in this place. The last letter I have had from my daughter was dated Feb. 27. I am persuaded she has wrote since, but I have never been so happy to receive any one. The inundations of the rivers (by the uncommon rains that have fallen this year at the time of the melting of the snow) have done a great deal of mischief. I have been in the number of the sufferers.

 TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Received at Welbeck, Thursday, Sept. 7th, 1749, O.S.]

Lovere, Aug. 20, N.S. [1749].

I RECEIVED this morning your ladyship's obliging letter of June 8th: the sight of your hand gave me great pleasure, but the complaints you make of ill-health equally alarmed and grieved me: I beg of you, dearest madam, not to write when

¹ A volume containing three tracts by Bolingbroke, one being the famous letter "On the Idea of a Patriot King." The publication was exciting much attention in London on account of the preface, which detailed Bolingbroke's charge against his deceased friend Pope of printing the letter without his sanction.—T.

it is troublesome to you ; God knows my heart, I would not purchase any happiness at the expense of the least inconvenience to you.

I have been here this month drinking the waters, by advice, having had many returns of the ague : but have found great benefit from those waters, and am now in hopes I am entirely quit of it. I think Lady F. Meadows pays very dear for whatever advantages she may gain, but interest is so commonly preferred to honour, I do not doubt her conduct will be applauded by many people.¹ I suppose Thoresby is (at least in part) rebuilt, or I know not where so many can lodge. My daughter writes me word she has fitted up that house² near Hampstead, which I once had the honour to see with your ladyship ; I hope it is a proof she is in no want of money. I propose staying here but a few days longer ; my love of retirement grows upon me, and 'tis my opinion whoever knows the world cannot be very fond of it. It is impossible for me to conclude my letter without recommending to you the care of yourself : it is no compliment, but a plain truth, when I say that your ladyship is the only true friend I ever had in my life ; judge, therefore, how dear you are to, dear madam,

Your most affectionate and faithful servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Lovere, August 22, N.S. [1749].

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of the 30th of May but yesterday, to my great vexation, fearing I may lose the box of books and (what is more dear to me) your letter by the delay of the post not bringing me the bill of loading in the proper time. I have sent a messenger to Venice, but would not defer giving you thanks till his return ; you say nothing of the price, but I insist on it you should take it from Child, with order he should deduct it in the next bill he sends to me.

¹ Lady Mary's correspondents accused Lady Frances Meadows of being too tolerant of her brother, the Duke of Kingston's *liaison* with Mademoiselle de la Touche, which explains the remark in the text.—T.

² Caenwood House was sold by Lord Bute, in 1755, to the Earl of Mansfield ; who rebuilt it from a design by Robert Adam.—W.

We are now very quiet here, all the *beau monde* being hurried away to the fair at Bergamo, which is esteemed the best in Italy, after that of Senegallia; our theatres are all shut up, the performers being also gone thither. I was much pressed to go by several parties; but would not fatigue myself with a journey of thirty miles. I have sent my woman to buy penn'orths, hearing that there are merchants from all parts of Europe. I am surprised at the account you give of London, yet can hardly suppose that there are not some rational creatures in it. The Duchess of Portland must be much altered if she is never content out of a crowd; and by the character of Lady Middlesex,¹ who, I am told, is your most intimate companion, I should guess her to be another that would prefer an easy conversation to the noise of an assembly. I very well remember Caenwood House, and cannot wish you in a more agreeable place. It would be a great pleasure to me to see my grandchildren run about in the gardens. I do not question Lord Bute's good taste in the improvements round it, or yours in the choice of the furniture. I have heard the fame of paper-hangings, and had some thoughts of sending for a suit, but was informed that they are as dear as damask here, which put an end to my curiosity. I believe you think it a long time since I promised my goddaughter a token; I will wait an opportunity of sending it, and engage it shall improve by the delay.

I am ever (dear child) your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to your little ones.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Oct. 1, N.S. [1749].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have at length received the box, with the books enclosed, for which I give you many thanks, as they amused me very much. I gave a very ridiculous proof of it, fitter indeed for my granddaughter than myself. I returned

¹ Miss Boyle, only daughter and heir of Richard Earl of Shannon, mistress of the robes to Augusta Princess of Wales, and wife of Charles Earl of Middlesex.—T.

from a party on horseback; and after having rode twenty miles, part of it by moonshine, it was ten at night when I found the box arrived. I could not deny myself the pleasure of opening it; and, falling upon Fielding's works, was fool enough to sit up all night reading. I think Joseph Andrews better than his Foundling. I believe I was the more struck with it, having at present a Fanny in my own house, not only by the name, which happens to be the same, but the extraordinary beauty, joined with an understanding yet more extraordinary at her age, which is but few months past sixteen: she is in the post of my chambermaid. I fancy you will tax my discretion for taking a servant thus qualified; but my woman, who is also my housekeeper, was always teasing me with her having too much work, and complaining of ill-health, which determined me to take her a deputy; and when I was at Lovere, where I drank the waters, one of the most considerable merchants there pressed me to take this daughter of his: her mother has an uncommon good character, and the girl has had a better education than is usual for those of her rank; she writes a good hand, and has been brought up to keep accounts, which she does to great perfection; and had herself such a violent desire to serve me, that I was persuaded to take her: I do not yet repent it from any part of her behaviour. But there has been no peace in the family ever since she came into it; I might say the parish, all the women in it having declared open war with her, and the men endeavouring at treaties of a different sort: my own woman puts herself at the head of the first party, and her spleen is increased by having no reason for it, the young creature never stirring from my apartment, always at her needle, and never complaining of anything.¹ You will laugh at this tedious account of my domestics (if you have patience to read it over), but I have few other subjects to talk of. I am sorry you did not take the money for the books from Child; I write [to] him this

¹ Her name was Chechina. She married and left Lady Mary's service in 1750.—T.

post to pay it to you, but you will wait longer for it than I could wish.

I am much pleased at your account of your children : may they ever be as agreeable to you as they are at present. The waters have very much mended my health. I endeavour to preserve it by constant riding, and am a better horsewoman than ever I was in my life, having complied with the fashion of this country, which is every way so much better than ours. I cannot help being amazed at the obstinate folly by which the English ladies venture every day their lives and limbs.

My paper only allows me to add, I am your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to your little ones.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Nov. 30, 1749.]

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received your agreeable letter of September 24th, yesterday, November 29th, and am very glad our daughter (for I think she belongs to us both) turns out so much to your satisfaction ; may she ever do so. I hope she has by this time received my token. I am afraid I have lost some of your letters. In last April you wrote me word the box directed to me was to set out in a week's time ; since that I have had no news of it, and apprehend very much that the bill which I suppose you sent me has miscarried. If so, I am in danger of losing the cargo. You please me extremely in saying my letters are of any entertainment to you. I would contribute to your happiness in every shape I can ; but, in my solitude, there are so few subjects present themselves, it is not easy to find one that would amuse you, though, as I believe, you have some leisure hours at Caenwood, where anything new is welcome. I will venture to tell you a small history in which I had some share. I have already informed you of the divisions and subdivisions of estates in this country, by which you will imagine there is a numerous gentry of great names

and little fortunes; six of those families inhabit this town. You may fancy this forms a sort of society; but far from it, as there is not one of them that does not think (for some reason or other) they are far superior to all the rest: there is such a settled aversion amongst them, they avoid one another with the utmost care, and hardly ever meet, except by chance at the castle (as they call my house), where their regard for me obliges them to behave civilly, but it is with an affected coldness that is downright disagreeable, and hinders me from seeing any of them often.

I was quietly reading in my closet, when I was interrupted by the chambermaid of the Signora Laura Bono, who flung herself at my feet, and, in an agony of sobs and tears, begged me, for the love of the holy Madonna, to hasten to her master's house, where the two brothers would certainly murder one another, if my presence did not stop their fury. I was very much surprised, having always heard them spoke of as a pattern of fraternal union. However, I made all possible speed thither, without staying for hoods or attendance. I was soon there (the house touching my garden wall), and was directed to the bed-chamber by the noise of oaths and execrations; but, on opening the door, was astonished to a degree you may better guess than I describe, by seeing the Signora Laura prostrate on the ground, melting in tears, and her husband standing with a drawn stiletto in his hand, swearing she should never see to-morrow's sun. I was soon let into the secret. The good man, having business of consequence at Brescia, went thither early in the morning; but, as he expected his chief tenant to pay his rent that day, he left orders with his wife, that if the farmer, who lived two miles off, came himself, or sent any of his sons, she should take care to make him very welcome. She obeyed him with great punctuality, the money coming in the hand of a handsome lad of eighteen: she did not only admit him to her own table, and produce the best wine in the cellar, but resolved to give him *chère entière*. While she was exercising this generous hospitality, the husband met midway the gentleman he intended to visit, who

was posting to another side of the country ; they agreed on another appointment, and he returned to his own house, where, giving his horse to be led round to the stable by the servant that accompanied him, he opened his door with the *passe-partout* key, and proceeded to his chamber, without meeting anybody, where he found his beloved spouse asleep on the bed with her gallant. The opening of the door waked them : the young fellow immediately leaped out of the window, which looked into the garden, and was open, it being summer, and escaped over the fields, leaving his breeches on a chair by the bedside—a very striking circumstance. In short, the case was such, I do not think the queen of fairies herself could have found an excuse, though Chaucer tells us she has made a solemn promise to leave none of her sex unfurnished with one, to all eternity. As to the poor criminal, she had nothing to say for herself but what I dare swear you will hear from your youngest daughter, if ever you catch her stealing of sweetmeats—“Pray, pray, she would do so no more, and indeed it was the first time.” This last article found no credit with me : I cannot be persuaded that any woman who had lived virtuous till forty (for such is her age) could suddenly be endowed with such consummate impudence, to solicit a youth at first sight, there being no probability, his age and station considered, that he would have made any attempt of that kind. I must confess I was wicked enough to think the unblemished reputation she had hitherto maintained, and did not fail to put us in mind of, was owing to a series of such frolics ; and to say truth, they are the only amours that can reasonably hope to remain undiscovered. Ladies that can resolve to make love thus *extempore*, may pass unobserved, especially if they can content themselves with low life, where fear may oblige their favourites to secrecy : there wants only a very lewd constitution, a very bad heart, and a moderate understanding, to make this conduct easy : and I do not doubt it has been practised by many prudes beside her I am now speaking of. You may be sure I did not communicate these reflections. The first word I spoke was to desire Signor Carlo

to sheathe his poniard, not being pleased with its glittering: he did so very readily, begging my pardon for not having done it on my first appearance, saying he did not know what he did, and indeed he had the countenance and gesture of a man distracted. I did not endeavour a defence; that seemed to me impossible; but represented to him, as well as I could, the crime of a murder, which, if he could justify before men, was still a crying sin before God; the disgrace he would bring on himself and posterity, and irreparable injury he would do his eldest daughter, a pretty girl of fifteen, that I knew he was extremely fond of. I added, that if he thought it proper to part from his lady, he might easily find a pretext for it some months hence; and that it was as much his interest as hers to conceal this affair from the knowledge of the world. I could not presently make him taste these reasons, and was forced to stay there near five hours (almost from five to ten at night) before I durst leave them together, which I would not do till he had sworn in the most serious manner he would make no future attempt on her life. I was content with his oath, knowing him to be very devout, and found I was not mistaken. How the matter was made up between them afterwards I know not; but it is now two years since it happened, and all appearances remaining as if it had never been. The secret is in very few hands; his brother, being at that time at Brescia, I believe knows nothing of it to this day. The chambermaid and myself have preserved the strictest silence, and the lady retains the satisfaction of insulting all her acquaintance on the foundation of a spotless character, that only she can boast in the parish, where she is most heartily hated, from these airs of impertinent virtue, and another very essential reason, being the best dressed woman among them, though one of the plainest in her figure.

The discretion of the chambermaid in fetching me, which possibly saved her mistress's life, and her taciturnity since, I fancy appear very remarkable to you, and is what would certainly never happen in England. The first part of her behaviour deserves great praise; coming of her own accord, and

inventing so decent an excuse for her admittance: but her silence may be attributed to her knowing very well that any servant that presumes to talk of his master will most certainly be incapable of talking at all in a short time, their lives being entirely in the power of their superiors: I do not mean by law, but by custom, which has full as much force. If one of them was killed, it would either never be inquired into at all, or very slightly passed over; yet it seldom happens, and I know no instance of it, which I think is owing to the great submission of domestics, who are sensible of their dependence, and the national temper not being hasty, and never inflamed by wine, drunkenness being a vice abandoned to the vulgar, and spoke of with greater detestation than murder, which is mentioned with as little concern as a drinking-bout in England, and is almost as frequent. It was extreme shocking to me at my first coming, and still gives me a sort of horror, though custom has in some degree familiarised it to my imagination. Robbery would be pursued with great vivacity, and punished with the utmost rigour, therefore is very rare, though stealing is in daily practice; but as all the peasants are suffered the use of fire-arms, the slightest provocation is sufficient to shoot, and they see one of their own species lie dead before them with as little remorse as a hare or a partridge, and, when revenge spurs them on, with much more pleasure. A dissertation on this subject would engage me in a discourse not proper for the post. My compliments to Lord Bute: his kindness to you ought to obtain the friendship of all that love you. My blessing to your little ones. Think of me as ever,

Your most affectionate mother.

Have you received my letter to my sister Mar?

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Received at Welbeck, Thursday, April 5th, O.S., 1750.]

March 2, N.S. [1750].

DEAREST MADAM,—I received this day the happiness of two letters you have honoured me with, dated December 23rd and January 6th. I am very glad your health is mended;

though it is not so well re-established as I could wish, yet I hope time will perfect it. I have passed this winter without any complaint, which I attribute to the waters of Lovere, and am resolved to drink them again in the season. I beg of you, dearest madam, let not your tenderness for me give you any uneasy moments; I could wish, indeed, my destiny had placed me near Welbeck, but then I remember that could not be, without being also near another place, from whence I should often hear accounts that would embitter even your ladyship's conversation. I am more sensible (perhaps) than I ought to be, of the figure my family makes, and often reflect on the happiness of my father, who died without seeing any of the misfortunes that have since happened. I heartily congratulate the satisfaction you express in your hopeful growing children; I pray God continue it, and every other blessing. I think you have a fair prospect in the good sense and good-nature of the Duke and Duchess of Portland: they cannot give better proof of both, than in a right behaviour to you; it is no more than your due; but in this age 'tis an uncommon merit to be just. I hope my daughter will be so far her own friend as to show herself on all occasions one of the duchess's humble servants. She sends me such a description of London as would cure me of desiring to see it, if it was my inclination, which, since your ladyship is not there, is no way my wish. Public life is what I was never fond of, and would now become me less than ever: I have always been amazed at the passion for it continuing, as in the late Duchess of Marlborough, and can only attribute it to the flatterers round her, who nourished in her that desire of applause, which is as vain as the endeavours of children that run to catch the rainbow. I need not say this to your ladyship, who, in highly deserving it, have always shunned it; but you have the goodness to permit me to communicate my thoughts to you, and 'tis a pleasure to me to show myself eternally, dearest madam,

Your ladyship's devoted humble servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[Received at Cav. Lodge, Thursday, June 21st.]

May 24, N.S. [1750].

FOR the first time of my life, I have had a kind letter from dear Lady Oxford lay by me four days unanswered; it found me on a sick-bed, from which I can scarce say I am risen, since I am up but a few hours in the day; and this is wrote (God knows) with a feeble hand, but I am impatient to thank your ladyship for your unwearied goodness to me. I have had the severest illness I ever had, and heard sentence of death pronounced against me. I am now told I am out of danger; I will not hurt your tenderness (which I am well acquainted with) by a recital of my sufferings.

Since Lady N. Pawlet¹ would take a boy, I am surprised she has found one with so good an estate; I suppose his father has many other sons, or is not fond of posterity.

May God continue every blessing to you! My weakness obliges me to finish my letter, with the assurance of my being ever, dearest madam,

Your faithful obedient servant.

I will write again soon if it please God to restore my health.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

May 28, N.S. [1750].

I RECEIVED yours on the 2nd of April, O.S., two days ago. I was then on a sick-bed, and am now scarce recovered of a very severe illness. It was a great comfort to me to hear of your health, for which I was in much pain. I have not had any letter from my daughter of a long time, and am sorry she breeds so fast, fearing it will impair her constitution.

I wonder you do not imitate, at London, the wise conduct of

¹ Lady Isabella Tufton, youngest daughter and co-heir of Thomas sixth Earl of Thanet, widow of Lord Nassau Pawlet, son of Charles second Duke of Bolton, by his third wife, Henrietta Crofts, youngest natural daughter of James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, by Eleanor, youngest daughter of Sir Robert Needham of Lambeth. Lord N. Pawlet died in 1741; she married, secondly, France Blake Delaval, afterwards Knight of the Bath, eldest son of Francis Blake Delaval, Esq., of Seaton Delaval, in the county of Northumberland.—W.

this state, who, when they found the rage of play untameable, invented a method to turn it to the advantage of the public. Now fools lose their estates, and the government profits by it.

I have wrote several long letters to my daughter, but know not whether she has received any of them. I must shorten this, from the weakness both of my head and hand.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

June 22, N.S. [1750].

MY DEAR CHILD,—Since you tell me my letters (such as they are) are agreeable to you, I shall for the future indulge myself in thinking upon paper when I write to you.

I cannot believe Sir John's¹ advancement is owing to his merit, though he certainly deserves such a distinction; but I am persuaded the present disposers of such dignities are neither more clear-sighted or more disinterested than their predecessors. Ever since I knew the world, Irish patents have been hung out to sale, like the laced and embroidered coats in Monmouth-street, and bought up by the same sort of people; I mean those who had rather wear shabby finery than no finery at all; though I do not suppose this was Sir John's case. That good creature (as the country saying is) has not a bit of pride in him. I dare swear he purchased his title for the same reason he used to purchase pictures in Italy; not because he wanted to buy, but because somebody or other wanted to sell. He hardly ever opened his mouth but to say "What you please, sir;"—"At your service;"—"Your humble servant;" or some gentle expression to the same effect. It is scarce credible that with this unlimited complaisance he should draw a blow upon himself; yet it so happened that one of his own countrymen was brute enough to strike him. As it was done before many witnesses, Lord Mansel heard of it; and thinking that if poor Sir John took no notice of it, he would suffer daily insults of the same kind, out of pure good nature resolved to spirit him up, at least to some show of resentment,

¹ Sir John Rawdon, created an Irish peer April 9, 1750, by the title of Baron Rawdon of Moira.—T.

intending to make up their matter afterwards in as honourable a manner as he could for the poor patient. He represented to him very warmly that no gentleman could take a box on the ear. Sir John answered with great calmness, "I know that, but this was not a box on the ear, it was only a slap of the face."

I was as well acquainted with his two first wives as the difference of our ages permitted. I fancy they have broke their hearts by being chained to such a companion. 'Tis really terrible, for a well-bred virtuous young woman to be confined to the conversation of the object of their [*sic*] contempt. There is but one thing to be done in that case, which is a method I am sure you have observed practised with success by some ladies I need not name: they associate the husband and the lap-dog, and manage so well, that they make exactly the same figure in the family. My lord and Dell tag after madam to all indifferent places, and stay at home together whenever she goes into company where they would be troublesome. I pity * * *, if the D. of K. [Duke of Kingston] marries. She will then know that her mean compliances will appear as despicable to him as they do now to other people. Who would have thought that all her nice notions and pious meditations would end in being the humble companion of M. [Mademoiselle] de la Touche?¹ I do not doubt she has been forced to it by necessity, and is one proof (amongst many I have seen) of what I always thought, that nobody should trust their virtue with necessity, the force of which is never known till it is felt, and it is therefore one of the first duties to avoid the temptation of it. I am not pleading for avarice—far from it. I can assure you I equally condemn * * *, who can forget she was born a gentlewoman, for the sake of money she did not want. That is indeed the only sentiment that properly

¹ A natural daughter of M. Bernard, the Paris banker. The young duke fled with her to England, and a prosecution for the abduction was commenced before the Parliament of Paris in 1737, but the French king arbitrarily put a stop to the proceedings. Lord Bathurst writes to Swift from "Gearcliffe Farm," on the 6th of December, 1737: "I want no foreign commodities. My neighbour, the Duke of Kingston, has imported one: but I do not think it worth the carriage." The duke lived with the lady many years.—T.

deserves the name of avarice. A prudential care of one's affairs, or (to go further) a desire of being in circumstances to be useful to one's friends, is not only excusable but highly laudable; never blamed but by those who would persuade others to throw away their money, in hopes to pick up a share of it. The greatest declaimers for disinterestedness I ever knew, have been capable of the vilest actions on the least view of profit; and the greatest instances of true generosity, given by those who were regular in their expenses and superior to the vanities in fashion.

I believe you are heartily tired of my dull moralities. I confess I am in very low spirits; it is hotter weather than has been known for some years, and I have got an abominable cold, which has drawn after it a troop of complaints I will not trouble you with reciting. I hope all your family are in good health. I am humble servant to Lord Bute. I give my blessing to my G[rand] children, and am ever your most affectionate mother.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Lovere, Sept. 3, N.S. [1750].

I RECEIVED yesterday yours dated June 24th. I am very well persuaded that the delay of all my letters, and the loss of many, is occasioned by the posts in Italy. I receive none but what are carelessly resealed, and some of them quite open. I am not surprised at it, considering the present circumstances, of which I would give you the detail, if it were safe to do it. I have now changed the method of conveyance, sending this to the English minister at Venice, who I have desired to put it in his packet. On the top of one of the highest hills with which this place is surrounded, here has been, two months since, accidentally discovered a remarkable piece of antiquity; a stone vault, in which was the remains of a human body, a table, a spoon and a knife, and about a hundred pieces of coin, of a mixed metal, in none of which there is any legible inscription. Most of them, with the rest of the things I have mentioned, are in the possession of the parish priest. I am endeavouring

to get them into mine. If I do, and you have any curiosity to see them, I will send them to you. It is certain there is no fraud in this discovery; the people here having no notion of the value of anything of this kind. I am of opinion it is a Gothic antiquity, there being no trace of any inscription having ever been upon the stone. Direct your next, "Recommandé au Chev. James Gray, Ministre de Sa M. Britannique, à Venise."

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Salo, Oct. 17, 1750.]

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of August 25th this morning, October 17th, N.S. It was every way welcome to me, particularly finding you and your family in good health. You will think me a great Rambler, being at present far distant from the date of my last letter. I have been persuaded to go to a palace near Salo, situate on the vast lake of Gardia, and do not repent my pains since my arrival, though I have passed a very bad road to it. It is indeed, take it altogether, the finest place I ever saw: the King of France has nothing so fine, nor can have in his situation. It is large enough to entertain all his court, and much larger than the royal palace of Naples, or any of those of Germany or England. It was built by the great Cosmo, Duke of Florence, where he passed many months, for several years, on the account of his health, the air being esteemed one of the best in Italy. All the offices and conveniences are suitably magnificent: but that is nothing in regard to the beauties without doors. It is seated in that part of the lake which forms an amphitheatre, at the foot of a mountain near three miles high, covered with a wood of orange, lemon, citron, and pomegranate trees, which is all cut into walks, and divided into terraces, that you may go into a several [*sic*] garden from every floor in the house, diversified with fountains, cascades, and statues, and joined by easy marble staircases, which lead from one to another. There are many covered walks, where you are secure from the sun in the hottest part of the day, by the shade of the orange-trees,

which are so loaded with fruit, you can hardly have any notion of their beauty without seeing them: they are as large as lime-trees in England. You will think I say a great deal: I will assure you I say far short of what I see, and you must turn to the fairy tales to give you any idea of the real charms of this enchanting palace, for so it may justly be called. The variety of the prospects, the natural beauties, and the improvements by art, where no cost has been spared to perfect it, render it the most complete habitation I know in Europe. While the poor present master of it (to whose ancestor the Grand-Duke presented it, having built it on his land), having spent a noble estate by gaming and other extravagance, would be glad to let it for a trifle, and is not rich enough to live in it. Most of the fine furniture is sold; there remains only a few of the many good pictures that adorned it, and such goods as were not easily to be transported, or for which he found no chapman. I have said nothing to you of the magnificent bath, embellished with statues, or the fish-ponds, the chief of which is in the midst of the garden to which I go from my apartment on the first floor. It is circled by a marble baluster, and supplied by water from a cascade that proceeds from the mouth of a whale, on which Neptune is mounted, surrounded with reeds: on each side of him are Tritons, which, from their shells, pour out streams that augment the pond. Higher on the hill are three colossal statues of Venus, Hercules, and Apollo. The water is so clear, you see the numerous fish that inhabit it, and it is a great pleasure to me to throw them bread, which they come to the surface to eat with great greediness. I pass by many other fountains, not to make my description too tedious. You will wonder, perhaps, never to have heard any mention of this paradise either from our English travellers, or in any of the printed accounts of Italy: it is as much unknown to them as if it was guarded by a flaming cherubin. I attribute that ignorance, in part, to its being twenty-five miles distant from any post town, and also to the custom of the English of herding together, avoiding the conversation of the Italians, who, on their

side, are naturally reserved, and do not seek strangers. Lady Orford could give you some knowledge of it, having passed the last six months she stayed here, in a house she hired at Salo; but as all her time was then taken up with the melancholy vapours her distresses had thrown her into, I question whether her curiosity ever engaged her to see this palace, though but half a mile from it.

Oct. 25th.

I was interrupted in this part of my letter by a visit from Count Martinenghi, master of this house, with his son and two daughters: they stayed till this morning, being determined to show me all the fine places on this side the lake, to engage me to grow fond of staying here, and I have had a very pleasant progress in viewing the most remarkable palaces within ten miles round. Three from hence is the little town of Maderna, where the last Duke of Mantua built a retreat worthy a sovereign. It is now in the hands of a rich merchant, who maintains it in all its beauty. It is not half so large as that where I am, but perfectly proportioned and uniform, from a design of Palladio's. The garden [is] in the style of Le Nôtre, and the furniture in the best taste of Paris. I am almost ready to confess it deserves the preference to this, though built at far less expense. The situations are as different as is possible, when both of them are between a mountain and the lake: that under which the Duke of Mantua chose to build is much lower than this, and almost sterile; the prospect of it is rather melancholy than agreeable; but the palace, being placed at the foot of it, is a mile distant from the lake, which forms a sort of peninsula, half a mile broad, and 'tis on that is the delightful garden, adorned with parterres, espaliers, all sorts of exotic plants, and ends in a thick wood, cut into ridings. That in the midst is large enough for a coach, and terminates at the lake, which appears from the windows like a great canal made on purpose to beautify the prospect. On the contrary, the palace where I lodge is so near the water, that you step out of the gate into the barge, and the gardens being all divided, you cannot view from the house above one of them at a time. In

short, these two palaces may in their different beauties rival each other, while they are neither of them to be excelled in any other part of the world.

I have wrote you a terrible long letter; but as you say you are often alone, it may serve you for half an hour's amusement; at least receive it as a proof that there is none more agreeable to me than giving assurances of my being, dear child, your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to my grandchildren.

P.S. Yours of the 23rd September is just this minute brought to me. I heartily wish you and my Lord Bute joy of his place; and wish it may have more advantageous consequences; but am glad you do not too much found hopes on things of so much uncertainty. I have read S. Fielding's works,¹ and should be glad to hear what is become of her. All the other books would be new to me excepting Pamela, which has met with very extraordinary (and I think undeserved) success. It has been translated into French and into Italian; it was all the fashion at Paris and Versailles, and is still the joy of the chambermaids of all nations.

Direct the books to the care of Sir James Gray, the English minister at Venice.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Brescia, Nov. 20, N.S. [1750].

I RECEIVED yours of October the 3rd much sooner than I have done any others of late, though it had been also opened. If I find any proper opportunity I will write you a long letter, which I do not care to hazard by the post. The great difference between this state and that of the Church has been slightly mentioned in the newspapers. It is not yet thoroughly

¹ Sarah (usually called Sally) Fielding, Henry Fielding's sister, who had some talents, and like himself wrote for bread. Her chief work was *David Simple*; for which he furnished a preface. We believe she was the authoress of the renowned *Mrs. Peach'em*, long ago supplanted by the *Emiles*, *Amis des Enfants*, *Adèles*, and *Early Lessons*, that have been pouring in upon our nurseries for the last fifty or sixty years.—W.

accommodated, though much softened since I wrote. I am very glad of Lord Bute's good fortune. I have wished my daughter joy in a long letter. I do not write so copiously to you, fearing it should be troublesome to your eyes. I sent her some Italian poetry which has been much admired here.

The continuation of your health is my most fervent desire, and the news of it my greatest pleasure.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Dec. 24, N.S. [1750].

DEAR CHILD—I received yours of October the 28th this morning, December 24th, N.S. I am afraid a letter of two sheets of paper that I sent you from Salo never came to your hands, which I am very sorry for: it would have been, perhaps, some entertainment, being the description of places that I am sure you have not found in any book of travels. I also made my hearty congratulations to Lord Bute and yourself on his place,¹ which I hope is an earnest of future advantages. I desired you would send me all the books of which you gave a catalogue, except H. Fielding's and his sister's, which I have already. I thank God my taste still continues for the gay part of reading.² Wiser people may think it trifling, but it serves to sweeten life to me, and is at worst better than the generality of conversation. I am extremely pleased with the account you give me of your father's health: his life is the greatest blessing that can happen to his family. I am very sincerely touched with the Duchess of Montague's misfortune,³ though I think it no reasonable cause for locking herself up. Age and ugliness are as inseparable as heat and fire, and I

¹ Lord Bute's appointment to be of the prince's bedchamber was the subject of these congratulations.—W.

² In Spence's *Anecdotes* by Singer, there is an observation of Lady Orford in these words: "I wonder how anybody can find pleasure in reading the books which are that lady's chief favourites." Here we have Lady Mary's confession of her liking for works of imagination, and her defence of her taste. Lady Orford, a learned lady and a sceptic, deep in metaphysics, regarded all lighter nonsense with high disdain. In *Pompey the Little*, Lady Sophister, meant for her and said to be very like her, is introduced astonishing a grave physician, whom she meets by chance at a morning visit and never saw before, by asking him abruptly "whether he believes in the immortality of the soul."

³ I suppose she had had the small-pox. She died in 1751.—T.

think it all one in what shape one's figure grows disagreeable. I remember the Princess of Moldavia at Constantinople made a party of pleasure the next day after losing one of her eyes; and when I wondered at her philosophy, said, she had more reason to divert herself than she had before. 'Tis true our climate is apt to inspire more melancholy ideas: the enlivening heat of the sun continues the cheerfulness of youth to the grave with most people. I received a visit not long since from a fair young lady, that had new lain in of her nineteenth child; in reality she is but thirty-seven, and has so well preserved her fine shape and complexion, she appears little past twenty. I wish you the same good fortune, though not quite so numerous a posterity. Every happiness is ardently desired for you by, dear child, your most affectionate mother.

P.S. My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all your little ones. I am ashamed not to have sent my token to my goddaughter; I hope to do it in a short time.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

February 11, N.S. [1751].

I HAVE not heard from you of a long time. I hope your silence is not occasioned by any indisposition. My daughter gave me the satisfaction of letting me know you returned from the north in good health. I do not give you the trouble of long letters, fearing that reading of them might be uneasy to your sight, but I write very largely to my daughter, supposing she will communicate them to you. The snow that began to fall here the last days of November is not yet off the ground; the roads are now scarce passable.

This weather is esteemed a prodigy in this country. I begin almost to credit the tradition in Herodotus, and believe the world will once again change its position, and Italy change situation with Muscovy.

I have not stirred out of my apartments these two months, though I have no reason to complain of my health: the continuation of yours is my most earnest wish.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 2, N.S. [1751].

DEAR CHILD,—I had the happiness of a letter from your father last post, by which I find you are in good health, though I have not heard from you of a long time. This frequent interruption of our correspondence is a great uneasiness to me: I charge it on the neglect or irregularity of the post. I sent you a letter by Mr. Anderson a great while ago, to which I never had any answer; neither have I ever heard from him since, though I am fully persuaded he has wrote concerning some little commissions I gave him. I should be very sorry he thought I neglected to thank him for his civilities. I desire Lord Bute would inquire about him. I saw him in company with a very pretty pupil, who seemed to me a promising youth. I wish he would fall in love with my granddaughter. I dare say you laugh at this early design of providing for her: take it as a mark of my affection for you and yours, which is without any mixture of self-interest, since, with my age and infirmities, there is little probability of my living to see them established. I no more expect to arrive at the age of the Duchess of Marlborough than to that of Methusalem; neither do I desire it. I have long thought myself useless to the world. I have seen one generation pass away; and it is gone; for I think there are very few of those left that flourished in my youth. You will perhaps call these melancholy reflections: they are not so. There is a quiet after the abandoning of pursuits, something like the rest that follows a laborious day. I tell you this for your comfort. It was formerly a terrifying view to me, that I should one day be an old woman. I now find that Nature has provided pleasures for every state. Those are only unhappy who will not be contented with what she gives, but strive to break through her laws, by affecting a perpetuity of youth, which appears to me as little desirable at present as the babies do to you, that were the delight of your infancy. I am at the end of my paper, which shortens the sermon of, dear child, your most affectionate mother.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

May 24, N.S. [1751].

I CAN no longer resist the desire I have to know what is become of my son. I have long suppressed it, from a belief that if there was anything of good to be told, you would not fail to give me the pleasure of hearing it. I find it now grows so much upon me, that whatever I am to know, I think it would be easier for me to support, than the anxiety I suffer from my doubts. I beg to be informed, and prepare myself for the worst, with all the philosophy I have. At my time of life I ought to be detached from a world which I am soon to leave; to be totally so is a vain endeavour, and perhaps there is vanity in the endeavour: while we are human, we must submit to human infirmities, and suffer them in mind as well as body. All that reflection and experience can do is to mitigate, we can never extinguish, our passions. I call by that name every sentiment that is not founded upon reason, and own I cannot justify to mine the concern I feel for one who never gave me any view of satisfaction.

This is too melancholy a subject to dwell upon. You compliment me on the continuation of my spirits: 'tis true, I try to maintain them by every art I can, being sensible of the terrible consequences of losing them. Young people are too apt to let theirs sink on any disappointment. I have wrote to my daughter all the considerations I could think of to lessen her affliction. I am persuaded you will advise her to amusements, and am very glad you continue that of travelling, as the most useful for health. I have been prisoner here some months, by the weather: the rivers are still impassable in most places; when they are abated, I intend some little excursions, being of your opinion that exercise is as necessary as food, though I have at present no considerable complaint; my hearing, and I think my memory, are without any decay, and my sight better than I could expect; it still serves me to read many hours in a day. I have appetite enough to relish what I eat, and have the same sound uninterrupted sleep that has continued through the course of my life, and to which I at-

tribute the happiness of not yet knowing the headache. I am very sorry you are so often troubled with it, but hope from your care and temperance, that if you cannot wholly overcome it, yet it may be so far diminished as not to give you any uneasiness, or affect your constitution.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

June 19, N.S. [1751].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yesterday yours of May 10th, in which was enclosed the captain's bill for the box. I am much obliged to Lord Bute for thinking of me so kindly: to say truth, I am as fond of baubles as ever, and am so far from being ashamed of it, it is a taste I endeavour to keep up with all the art I am mistress of. I should have despised them at twenty for the same reason that I would not eat tarts or cheesecakes at twelve years old, as being too childish for one capable of more solid pleasures. I now know (and alas! have long known) all things in this world are almost equally trifling, and our most secret projects have scarce more foundation than those edifices that your little ones raise in cards. You see to what period the vast fortunes of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, and Sir Robert Walpole, are soon arrived. I believe as you do, that Lady Orford is a joyful widow,¹ but am persuaded she has as much reason to weep for her husband as ever any woman has had, from Andromache to this day. I never saw any second marriage that did not appear to me very ridiculous: hers is accompanied with circumstances that render the folly complete.

Sicknesses have been very fatal in this country as well as England. I should be glad to know the names of those you say are deceased: I believe I am ignorant of half of them, the Dutch news being forbid here. I would not have you give yourself the trouble, but order one of your servants to transcribe the catalogue. You will perhaps laugh at this curiosity. If you ever return to Bute, you will find, that what happens in the world is a considerable amusement in solitude. The

¹ The Earl of Orford, son of Sir Robert Walpole, died March 31, 1751.—T.

people I see here make no more impression on my mind than the figures in the tapestry : while they are directly before my eyes, I know one is clothed in blue, and another in red ; but out of sight, they are so entirely out of memory, I hardly remember whether they are tall or short. I sometimes call myself to account for this insensibility, which has something of ingratitude in it, this little town thinking themselves highly honoured and obliged by my residence : they intended me an extraordinary mark of it, having determined to set up my statue in the most conspicuous place : the marble was bespoke, and the sculptor bargained with, before I knew anything of the matter ; and it would have been erected without my knowledge, if it had not been necessary for him to see me to take the resemblance. I thanked him very much for his intention ; but utterly refused complying with it, fearing it would be reported (at least in England) that I had set up my own statue. They were so obstinate in the design, I was forced to tell them my religion would not permit it. I seriously believe it would have been worshipped, when I was forgotten, under the name of some saint or other, since I was to have been represented with a book in my hand, which would have passed for a proof of canonisation. This compliment was certainly founded on reasons not unlike those that first framed goddesses, I mean being useful to them, in which I am second to Ceres. If it be true she taught the art of sowing wheat, it is sure I have learned them to make bread, in which they continued in the same ignorance Misson complains of (as you may see in his letter from Padua). I have introduced French rolls, custards, minced pies, and plum-pudding, which they are very fond of. 'Tis impossible to bring them to conform to sillabub, which is so unnatural a mixture in their eyes, they are even shocked to see me eat it : but I expect immortality from the science of butter-making, in which they are become so skilful from my instructions, I can assure you here is as good as in any part of Great Britain. I am afraid I have bragged of this before ; but when you do not answer any part of my letters, I suppose them lost, which exposes you to some

repetitions. Have you received that I wrote on my first notice on the prince's death?¹ I shall receive Lord Bute's china with great pleasure. The pearl necklace for my god-daughter has been long packed up for her, I wish I could say sent. In the mean time give her, and the rest of yours, my blessing: with thanks and compliments to Lord Bute, from your most affectionate mother.

I desire you would order the china to be packed up by some skilful man of the trade, or I shall receive it in pieces.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

June 20, N.S. [1751].

I RECEIVED yours of May the 9th yesterday, with great satisfaction, finding in it an amendment of your health. I am not surprised at Lady Orford's folly,² having known her at Florence: she made great court to me. She has parts, and a very engaging manner. Her company would have amused me very much, but I durst not indulge myself in it, her character being in universal horror. I do not mean from her gallantries, which nobody trouble their heads with, but she had a collection of free-thinkers that met weekly at her house, to the scandal of all good Christians. She invited me to one of those honourable assemblies, which I civilly refused, not desiring to be thought of her opinion, nor thinking it right to make a jest of ordinances that are (at least) so far sacred, as they are absolutely necessary in all civilised governments; and it is being in every sense an enemy to mankind to endeavour to overthrow them. Tar-water is arrived in Italy. I have been asked several questions concerning the use of it in England. I do not find it makes any great progress here; the doctors confine it to a possibility of being useful in the case of inward ulcers, and allow it no further merit. I told you, some time ago, the method in this country of making it the interest of the physician to keep the town in good health. I wish that, and the Roman law concerning last testaments,

¹ Frederick Prince of Wales died 20th March, 1751.—T.

² Alluding to her marriage to Mr. Shirley, already mentioned.—T.

were imported for the good of England: I know no foreign fashion or quackery that would be so useful among us. I have wrote a long letter to my daughter this post; I cannot help fearing for her. Time and distance have increased, and not diminished, my tenderness for her. I own it is stronger than my philosophy: my reason agrees with Atticus, but my passions are the same with Tully's.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[July 23, N.S., 1751.]

DEAR CHILD,—I received yesterday, July 22nd, N.S., yours of June 2nd. I own I could not help regretting the D. [Duchess] of Montague (with whom I have passed many agreeable hours), though I think I am in the wrong in so doing, being persuaded her life was grown burthensome to her, and I believe she would not own herself in danger to avoid the remedies that would have been pressed upon her. I am not surprised at Lady Orford's marriage: her money was, doubtless, convenient to Mr. Shirley, and I dare swear she piques herself on not being able to refuse him anything. It has been her way with all her lovers: he is the most creditable of any she ever had: his birth and sense will induce him to behave to her with decency, and it is what she has not been much used to. As it is a true saying, "Cowards more blows than any hero bear," it is as certainly true, ladies of pleasure (very improperly so called) suffer more mortifications than any nun of the most austere order that ever was instituted. Lady Orford is a shining instance of that truth; the most submissive wife to the most tyrannic husband that ever was born, is not such a slave as I saw her at Florence. I have hardly ever seen engagements of that sort on another footing. Contempt is joined with satiety in those cases, and there are few men that do not indulge the malignity that is in human nature, when they can do it (as they fancy) justifiably.

I have had a return, though in a less degree, of the distemper I had last year, and am afraid I must go again to the waters of Lovere. The journey is so disagreeable I would



H. G. Wallcut, sc.

MARY, COUNTESS OF BUTE.

REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION FROM AN ORIGINAL PICTURE BY SIR JAMES OSMAN, NOW IN THE POSSESSION OF THE MARQUIS OF BUTE.



willingly avoid it ; and I have little taste for the diversions of the place.

August 1.

Thus far of my letter was wrote at Gottolengo, and it is concluded at Lovere, where the doctors have dragged me. I find much more company than ever. I have done by these waters as I formerly did by those at Islington:¹ you may remember when I first carried you there, we scarce saw any but ourselves, and in a short time we could hardly find room for the crowd. I arrived but last night, so can say nothing of my success in relation to my health. I must end my letter in a hurry ; here is company ; and I can only say I am ever your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Lovere, Nov. 1 [1751].

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of August 25th, and my Lord Bute's obliging notice of your safe delivery at the same time. I wish you joy of your young son,² and of everything else. You do not mention your father, by which I suppose he is not returned to England,³ and am in pain for his health, having heard but once from him since he left it, and know not whether he has received my letters. I dare say you need not be in any doubt of his good opinion of you ; for my part, I am so far persuaded of the goodness of your heart, I have often

¹ Islington Spa, or new Tunbridge Wells, "situated near the new River Head," was in existence as early as the reign of Charles the Second. It seems to have declined in popularity for some years before 1732, about which period it completely revived. This, therefore, is no doubt the time to which Lady Mary alludes. As with similar places its medicinal waters were only secondary attractions to its garden-walks, coffee-rooms, music, and fêtes. The Gentleman's Magazine for June, 1733, speaks of the daily visits of the Princesses Amelia and Caroline to the Islington Spa for the purpose of drinking the waters, "when such was the concourse of nobility and others, that the proprietor took above 30*l.* in one morning." The writer adds: "On the birthday of the princesses, as they passed through the Spa-fields, which was generally filled with carriages, they were saluted with a discharge of twenty-one guns, a compliment which was always paid them on their arrival ; and in the evening there was a great bonfire, and the guns were again discharged several times." The Spa had again lost its reputation in 1778, and in spite of subsequent efforts to revive it, gradually disappeared from the list of suburban places of amusement.—T.

² Frederick Stuart, born September 24, 1751.—T.

³ Mr. Wortley Montagu left England for Vienna about June, and returned about November, 1751.—T.

had a mind to write you a consolatory epistle on my own death, which I believe will be some affliction, though my life is wholly useless to you. That part of it which we passed together you have reason to remember with gratitude, though I think you misplace it; you are no more obliged to me for bringing you into the world, than I am to you for coming into it, and I never made use of that common-place (and like most common-place, false) argument, as exacting any return of affection. There was a mutual necessity on us both to part at that time, and no obligation on either side. In the case of your infancy, there was so great a mixture of instinct, I can scarce even put that in the number of the proofs I have given you [of] my love; but I confess I think it a great one, if you compare my after-conduct towards you with that of other mothers, who generally look on their children as devoted to their pleasures, and bound by duty to have no sentiments but what they please to give them; playthings at first, and afterwards the objects on which they may exercise their spleen, tyranny, or ill humour. I have always thought of you in a different manner. Your happiness was my first wish, and the pursuit of all my actions, divested of all self-interest. So far I think you ought, and believe you do, remember me as your real friend. Absence and distance have not the power to lessen any part of my tenderness for you, which extends to all yours, and I am ever your most affectionate mother.

I send no compliments to Lord Bute, having wrote to him this post.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Lovere, Nov. 10, N.S. [1751].

I RECEIVED yours of October 10th this day, which is much quicker than any I ever had from England. I will not make any reflections on the conduct of the person you mention;¹ 'tis a subject too melancholy to us both. I am of opinion tallying at Bassette is a certain revenue (even without cheating) to

¹ This evidently alludes to her son.—W. From what follows, it is probable that the allusion is to her son's affair with Abraham Payba, which was going on at this time.—T.

those that can get constant punters, and are able to submit to the drudgery of it ; but I never knew any one pursue it long and preserve a tolerable reputation. The news of the recovery of your health makes me amends for the displeasure of hearing his ill figure.

I have often read and been told, that the air of Hungary¹ is better, and the inhabitants in general longer lived, than in any other part of Europe. You have given me a very surprising instance of it, far surpassing in age the old woman of Lovere, though, in some circumstances, I think her story as extraordinary. She died but ten years ago ; and it is well remembered by the inhabitants of that place, the most creditable of whom have all assured me of the truth of the following facts :—She kept the greatest inn there till past fifty : her husband then dying, and she being rich, she left off that trade ; and having a large house, with a great deal of furniture, she let lodgings, which her daughters (two maids past seventy) still continue. I lodged with them the first year of my going to those waters. She lived to one hundred with good health ; but in the last five years of it fell into the decays common to that period—dimness of sight, loss of teeth, and baldness ; but in her hundredth year, her sight was totally restored, she had a new set of teeth, and a fresh head of brown hair. Her daughters assured me she had also another mark of youth. * * * I mentioned it to several ladies, who none of them had heard it, but the rest was confirmed to me by everybody. She lived in this renewed vigour ten years, and had then her picture drawn, which has a vivacity in the eyes and complexion that would become five-and-twenty, though, by the falls in the face, one may discern it was drawn for a very old person. She died merely of an accident, which would have killed any other—tumbling down a very bad stone staircase which goes into the cellar ; she broke her head in such a manner, she lived but two days. The physician and surgeon who attended her told me her age no way contributed to her death. I inquired whether

¹ Mr. Wortley Montagu having been in Vienna shortly before the date of this letter, had probably extended his travels into some part of Hungary.—T.

there was any singularity in her diet, but heard of none, excepting that her breakfast was every morning a large quantity of bread sopped in cold water. The common food of the peasants in this country is the Turkish wheat you mention, which they dress in various manners, but use little milk, it being chiefly reserved for cheese, or the tables of the gentry. I have not observed, either among the poor or rich, that in general they live longer than in England. This woman of Lovere is always spoken of as a prodigy; and [I] am surprised she is neither called saint nor witch, being [*sic*] very prodigal of those titles.

I return you many thanks for the length of your entertaining letter; but am very sorry it was troublesome to you. I wish the reading of this may not be so. I will seek for a picture for Lord Bute.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Dec. 8 [1751].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of October 24th yesterday, which gave me great pleasure, by the account of the good health of you and yours; I need not say how near that is to my heart. I had the satisfaction of an entertaining letter from your father, out of Germany, by which I find he has had both benefit and amusement from his travels. I hope he is now with you.

I find you have many wrong notions of Italy, which I do not wonder at. You can take your ideas of it only from books or travellers; the first are generally antiquated or confined to trite observations, and the other yet more superficial; they return no more instructed than they might have been at home by the help of a map. The boys only remember where they met with the best wine or the prettiest women; and the governors (I speak of the most learned amongst them) have only remarked situations and distances, or, at most, statues and edifices, as every girl that can read a French novel, and boy that can construe a scene in Terence, fancies they have attained to the French and Latin languages, when, God knows, it requires the study of a whole life to acquire a per-

fect knowledge of either of them: so, after a tour (as they call it) of three years round Europe, people think themselves qualified to give exact accounts of the customs, policies, and interests of the dominions they have gone through post; when a very long stay, a diligent inquiry, and a nice observation, are requisite even to a moderate degree of knowing a foreign country, especially here, where they are naturally very reserved. France, indeed, is more easily seen through: the French always talking of themselves, and the government being the same, there is little difference from one province to another; but, in Italy, the different laws make different customs and manners, which are in many things very particular here, from the singularity of the government. Some I do not care to touch upon, and some are still in use here, though obsolete in almost all other places, as the estates of all the great families being unalienable, as they were formerly in England. This would make them very potent, if it was not balanced by another law, that divides whatever land the father dies possessed of among all the sons, the eldest having no advantage but the finest house and best furniture. This occasions numerous branches and few large fortunes, with a train of consequences you may imagine. But I cannot let pass in silence the prodigious alteration, since Misson's writing,¹ in regard to our sex. This reformation (or, if you please, depravation) began so lately as the year 1732, when the French overrun this part of Italy; but it has been carried on with such fervour and success, that the Italian go far beyond their patterns, the Parisian ladies, in the extent of their liberty. I am not so much surprised at the women's conduct, as I am amazed at the change in the men's sentiments. Jealousy, which was once a point of honour among them, is exploded to that degree, it is the most infamous and ridiculous of all characters; and you cannot more affront a gentleman than to suppose him capable of it. Divorces are also introduced, and frequent enough; they have long been in fashion in Genoa; several of the finest and greatest ladies there having two hus-

¹ *Nouveau Voyage d'Italie, par Maximilien Misson.* 2 tom. Haye, 1691.—T.

bands alive. The constant pretext is impotency, to which the man often pleads guilty, and though he marries again, and has children by another wife, the plea remains good by saying he was so in regard to his first; and when I told them that in England a complaint of that kind was esteemed so impudent no reasonable woman would submit to make it, I was answered we lived without religion, and that their consciences obliged them rather to strain a point of modesty than live in a state of damnation. However, as this method is not without inconvenience (it being impracticable where there is children), they have taken another here: the husband deposes upon oath that he has had a commerce with his mother-in-law, on which the marriage is declared incestuous and nullified, though the children remain legitimate. You will think this hard on the old lady, who is scandalised; but it is no scandal at all, nobody supposing it to be true, without circumstances to confirm it; but the married couple are set free to their mutual content; for I believe it would be difficult to get a sentence of divorce, if either side made opposition; at least I have heard no example of it.

I am afraid you will think this long letter very tedious; but you tell me you are without company, and in solitude anything amuses, though yours appears to me a sort of paradise. You have an agreeable habitation, a pleasant garden, a man you love and that loves you, and are surrounded with a numerous, hopeful progeny. May they all prove comforts to your age! That and all blessings is daily wished you by, my dear child,

Your affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to your little ones.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am extremely concerned to hear you complain of ill health, at a time of life when you ought to be in the flower of your strength. I hope I need not recommend to you the care of it: the tenderness you have for your children is sufficient to enforce you to the utmost regard for the preservation of a life so necessary to their well-being. I

do not doubt your prudence in their education : neither can I say anything particular relating to it at this distance, different tempers requiring different management. In general, never attempt to govern them (as most people do) by deceit : if they find themselves cheated, even in trifles, it will so far lessen the authority of their instructor, as to make them neglect all their future admonitions. And, if possible, breed them free from prejudices ; those contracted in the nursery often influence the whole life after, of which I have seen many melancholy examples. I shall say no more of this subject, nor would have said this little if you had not asked my advice : 'tis much easier to give rules than to practise them. I am sensible my own natural temper is too indulgent : I think it the least dangerous error, yet still it is an error. I can only say with truth, that I do not know in my whole life having ever endeavoured to impose on you, or give a false colour to anything that I represented to you. If your daughters are inclined to love reading, do not check their inclination by hindering them of the diverting part of it ; it is as necessary for the amusement of women as the reputation of men ; but teach them not to expect or desire any applause from it. Let their brothers shine, and let them content themselves with making their lives easier by it, which I experimentally know is more effectually done by study than any other way. Ignorance is as much the fountain of vice as idleness, and indeed generally produces it. People that do not read, or work for a livelihood, have many hours they know not how to employ ; especially women, who commonly fall into vapours, or something worse. I am afraid you'll think this letter very tedious : forgive it, as coming from

Your most affectionate mother.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Jan. 29, N.S., 1752.¹]

I HAD the pleasure of receiving yours of November 25 yesterday, and am very glad to find by it that you are arrived in London in good health. I heartily wish you the continuance of it. My deafness lasted only a fortnight, though it frightened

¹ The date is derived from a memorandum in Mr. Wortley Montagu's handwriting.—T.

me very much. I have had no return of it since. Your advice to Mr. M. was certainly right, but I am not surprised he did not follow it. I believe there are few men in the world (I never knew any) capable [of] such a strength of resolution as yourself. I have answered your letter from Vienna, but as you do not mention having received mine, and perhaps it is lost, I shall add a word or two more concerning the use of Turkish wheat. It is generally declaimed against by all the doctors; and some of them have wrote treatises to show the ill consequences of it, in which they say, that since it has been sown (which is not above one hundred years), it may be proved from the registers that the mortality is greater amongst the country people than it was formerly. I believe that may be true in regard to children, who are apt to eat greedily, it being very heavy of digestion; but to those whose stomachs can bear it, and eat with moderation, I am persuaded it is a clean strengthening diet. I have made strict observations and inquiries on the health and manner of life of the countries in which I have resided, and have found little difference in the length of life. It is true, gout, stone, and small-pox (so frequent with us) are little known here: in recompense, pleurisies, peripneumonies, and fevers (especially malignant) are far more usual: and I am clearly of opinion that, if an exact computation was made, as many die in Brescia as in London, in proportion to the different numbers. I have not heard from my daughter of a long time; which may be occasioned by the bad weather. I hope both you and she are well. I have wrote to her many long letters.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Feb. 16, N.S., 1752.]

DEAR CHILD,—I received yesterday, February 15th, N.S., the case of books you were so good to send to me: the entertainment they have already given me has recompensed me for the long time I expected them. I began by your direction with *Peregrine Pickle*.¹ I think Lady V. [Vane]'s *Memoirs* contain more truth and less malice than any I ever read in my

¹ Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle* was published in February, 1751.—T.

life. When she speaks of her own being disinterested, I am apt to believe she really thinks herself so, as many highway-men, after having no possibility of retrieving the character of honesty, please themselves with that of being generous, because, whatever they get on the road, they always spend at the next ale-house, and are still as beggarly as ever. Her history, rightly considered, would be more instructive to young women than any sermon I know. They may see there what mortifications and variety of misery are the unavoidable consequences of gallantries. I think there is no rational creature that would not prefer the life of the strictest Carmelite to the round of hurry and misfortune she has gone through. Her style is clear and concise, with some strokes of humour, which appear to me so much above her, I can't help being of opinion the whole has been modelled by the author of the book in which it is inserted, who is some subaltern admirer of hers. I may judge wrong, she being no acquaintance of mine, though she has married two of my relations. Her first wedding was attended with circumstances that made me think a visit not at all necessary, though I disoblged Lady Susan by neglecting it; and her second, which happened soon after, made her so near a neighbour, that I rather chose to stay the whole summer in town than partake of her balls and parties of pleasure, to which I did not think it proper to introduce you; and had no other way of avoiding it, without incurring the censure of a most unnatural mother for denying you diversions that the pious Lady Ferrers¹ permitted to her exemplary daughters. Mr. Shirley has had uncommon fortune in making the conquest of two such extraordinary ladies, equal in their heroic contempt of shame, and eminent above their sex, the one for beauty, and the other wealth, both which attract the pursuit of all mankind, and have been thrown into his arms with the same unlimited fondness. He appeared to me gentile [*sic*], well bred, well shaped, and sensible; but the charms of his face and eyes, which Lady V. [Vane] describes with so much warmth, were, I confess, always invisible to me,

¹ See note, *post*, p. 240.—T.

and the artificial part of his character very glaring, which I think her story shows in a strong light.

The next book I laid my hand on was the *Parish Girl*,¹ which interested me enough not to be able to quit it till it was read over, though the author has fallen into the common mistake of romance-writers; intending a virtuous character, and not knowing how to draw it; the first step of his heroine (leaving her patroness's house) being altogether absurd and ridiculous, justly entitling her to all the misfortunes she met with. Candles came (and my eyes grown weary), I took up the next book, merely because I supposed from the title it could not engage me long. It was *Pompey the Little*,² which has really diverted me more than any of the others, and it was impossible to go to bed till it was finished. It was a real and exact representation of life, as it is now acted in London, as it was in my time, and as it will be (I do not doubt) a hundred years hence, with some little variation of dress, and perhaps government. I found there many of my acquaintance. Lady T. and Lady O. are so well painted,³ I fancied I heard them talk, and have heard them say the very things there repeated. I also saw myself (as I now am) in the character of Mrs. Qualmsick. You will be surprised at this, no English-woman being so free from vapours, having never in my life complained of low spirits or weak nerves; but our resemblance is very strong in the fancied loss of appetite, which I have been silly enough to be persuaded into by the physician of this place. He visits me frequently, as being one of the most considerable men in the parish, and is a grave, sober thinking, great fool, whose solemn appearance, and deliberate way of delivering his sentiments, gives them an air of good sense, though they are often the most injudicious that ever were pronounced. By perpetual telling me I eat so little, he is amazed I am able to subsist. He had brought me to be of

¹ The History of Charlotte Summers, the Fortunate Parish Girl, published in February, 1750.—T.

² The novel of Pompey the Little, or the Adventures of a Lap-Dog, was published in February, 1751. Its author was Mr. Coventry.—T.

³ In the novel, Lady T. (*Townshend*) is named *Lady Tempest*; Lady O. (*Orford*), *Lady Sophister*.—T.

his opinion; and I began to be seriously uneasy at it. This useful treatise has roused me into a recollection of what I eat yesterday, and do almost every day the same. I wake generally about seven, and drink half a pint of warm asses' milk, after which I sleep two hours; as soon as I am risen, I constantly take three cups of milk coffee, and two hours after that a large cup of milk chocolate: two hours more brings my dinner, where I never fail swallowing a good dish (I don't mean plate) of gravy soup, with all the bread, roots, &c., belonging to it. I then eat a wing and the whole body of a large fat capon, and a veal sweetbread, concluding with a competent quantity of custard, and some roasted chesnuts. At five in the afternoon I take another dose of asses' milk; and for supper twelve chesnuts (which would weigh twenty-four of those in London), one new laid egg, and a handsome porringer of white bread and milk. With this diet, notwithstanding the menaces of my wise doctor, I am now convinced I am in no danger of starving; and am obliged to Little Pompey for this discovery.

I opened my eyes this morning on Leonora,¹ from which I defy the greatest chemist in morals to extract any instruction; the style most affectedly florid, and naturally insipid, with such a confused heap of admirable characters, that never were, or can be, in human nature. I flung it aside after fifty pages, and laid hold of Mrs. Philips,² where I expected to find at least probable, if not true facts, and was not disappointed. There is a great similitude in the genius and adventures (the one being productive of the other) between Madame Con. [Constantia] and Lady Vane: the first mentioned has the advantage in birth, and, if I am not mistaken, in understanding: they have both had scandalous lawsuits with their husbands, and are endowed with the same intrepid assurance. Con. seems to value herself also on her generosity, and has given the same proofs of it. The parallel might be drawn out to be as long as any of Plutarch's; but I dare swear you are

¹ The title of this novel was, I believe, *Eleanora's Adventures*. It was published in 1751.—T.

² The Life of Mrs. Teresa Constantia Philips.—T.

already heartily weary of my remarks, and wish I had not read so much in so short a time, that you might not be troubled with my comments; but you must suffer me to say something of the polite Mr. St^e, whose name I should never have guessed by the rapturous description his mistress makes of his person, having always looked upon him as one of the most disagreeable fellows about town, as odious in his outside as stupid in his conversation, and I should as soon have expected to hear of his conquests at the head of an army as among women; yet he has been, it seems, the darling favourite of the most experienced of the sex, which shows me I am a very bad judge of merit. But I agree with Mrs. Philips, that, however profligate she may have been, she is infinitely his superior in virtue; and if her penitence is as sincere as she says, she may expect their future fate to be like that of Dives and Lazarus.

This letter is of a most immoderate length. I [hope?] it will find you at Caenwood: your solitude there will permit you to peruse, and even to forgive, all the impertinence of your most affectionate mother.

My blessing to our children, and compliments to Lord Bute. I enclose a bill to pay the overplus due to you, and serve for future little commissions.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 1, N.S.

DEAR CHILD,—I have now finished your books, and I believe you will think I have made quick despatch. To say truth, I have read night and day. Mr. Loveill¹ gave me some entertainment, though there is but one character in it that I can find out. I do not doubt Mr. Depy is designed for Sir John Rawdon. The adventure mentioned at Rome really happened to him, with this addition: that after he was got quit of his fear of being suspected in the interest of the P. [Pretender], he endeavoured to manifest his loyalty by railing at

¹ The Adventures of Mr. Loveill, interspersed with many real Amours of the Modern Polite World, 1750, 2 vols.—T.

him in all companies, with all the warmth imaginable; on which his companions persuaded him that his death was absolutely determined by that court; and he durst not stir out for some time, for fear of being assassinated; nor eat, for fear of being poisoned. I saw him at Venice, where, on hearing it said I had been at Constantinople, he asked Lord Mansel by what accident I made that journey. He answered, Mr. Wortley had been ambassador to the Porte. Sir J. replied, to what port? the port of Leghorn!—I could relate many speeches of his of equal beauty, but I believe you are already tired of hearing of him, as much as I was with the memoirs of Miss H. Stuart;¹ who, being intended for an example of wit and virtue, is a jilt and a fool in every page. But while I was indolently perusing the marvellous figures she exhibits, no more resembling anything in human nature than the wooden cut in the Seven Champions, I was roused into great surprise and indignation by the monstrous abuse of one of the very few women I have a real value for; I mean Lady B. F.;² who is not only clearly meant by the mention of her library (she being the only lady at court that has one), but her very name at length, she being christened Cecilia Isabella, though she chooses to be called by the latter. I always thought her conduct, in every light, so irreproachable, I did not think she had an enemy upon earth; I now see 'tis impossible to avoid them, especially in her situation. It is one of the misfortunes of a supposed court interest (perhaps you may know it by experience), even the people you have obliged hate you, if they do not think you have served to the utmost extent of a power that they fancy you are possessed of; which it may be is only imaginary.

On the other hand, I forgive Jo. Thompson³ two volumes

¹ Harriet Stuart was the first novel written by Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, and certainly a very indifferent one.—W. It was published in December, 1750.—T.

² Lady Belle Finch, one of the many daughters of Lord Nottingham (Swift's Dismal), who before his death succeeded to the older title of Winchilsea. She was sister to the Duchess of Roxburgh, the Duchess of Cleveland, Lady Mansfield, Lady Rockingham, &c.; and was lady of the bedchamber to the Princess Amelia.—W.

³ The Life and Adventures of Joe Thompson. 2 vols. London [August], 1750. [A novel.]—T.

of absurdities, for the sake of justice he has done to the memory of the Duke of Montagu; who really had (in my opinion) one of the most humane dispositions that ever appeared in the world. I was such an old fool as to weep over *Clarissa Harlowe*, like any milkmaid of sixteen over the ballad of the *Lady's Fall*. To say truth, the first volume softened me by a near resemblance of my maiden days; but on the whole 'tis most miserable stuff. Miss How, who is called a young lady of sense and honour, is not only extreme silly, but a more vicious character than *Sally Martin*, whose crimes are owing at first to seduction, and afterwards to necessity; while this virtuous damsel, without any reason, insults her mother at home and ridicules her abroad; abuses the man she marries; and is impertinent and impudent with great applause. Even that model of affection, *Clarissa*, is so faulty in her behaviour as to deserve little compassion. Any girl that runs away with a young fellow, without intending to marry him, should be carried to *Bridewell* or to *Bedlam* the next day. Yet the circumstances are so laid, as to inspire tenderness, notwithstanding the low style and absurd incidents; and I look upon this and *Pamela* to be two books that will do more general mischief than the works of *Lord Rochester*. There is something humorous in *R. Random*, that makes me believe that the author is *H. Fielding*.¹ I am horribly afraid I guess too well the writer of those abominable insipidities of *Cornelia*,² *Leonora*,³ and the *Ladies Drawing Room*.—I fancy you are now saying, 'tis a sad thing to grow old; what does my poor mamma mean by troubling me with criticisms on books that nobody but herself will ever read? You must allow something to my solitude. I have a pleasure in writing to my dear child, and not many subjects to write upon. The adventures of people here would not at all amuse you, having no acquaintance with the persons concerned; and an account of myself would hardly gain credit, after having

¹ The reader need not be informed that *Lady Mary's* guess was incorrect.—T.

² *The History of Cornelia* [a novel], 1751.—T.

³ Probably *Eleanora*, or a *Tragical but True Case of Incest in Great Britain*, a novel published in 1751.—T.

fairly owned to you how deplorably I was misled in regard to my own health; though I have all my life been on my guard against the information by the sense of hearing; it being one of my earliest observations, the universal inclination of mankind is to be led by the ears; and I am sometimes apt to imagine, that they are given to men, as they are to pitchers, purposely that they may be carried about by them. This consideration should abate my wonder to see (as I do here) the most astonishing legends embraced as the most sacred truths, by those who have always heard them asserted, and never contradicted; they even place a merit in complying in direct opposition to the evidence of all their other senses.

I am very much pleased with the account you give me of your father's health. I hope your own, and that of your family, is perfect; give my blessing to your little ones, and my compliments to Lord Bute, and think me ever

Your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.¹

MY DEAR CHILD,—'Tis impossible to tell you to what degree I share with you in the misfortune that has happened. I do not doubt your own reason will suggest to you all the alleviations that can serve on so sad an occasion, and will not trouble you with the common-place topics that are used, generally to no purpose, in letters of consolation. Disappointments ought to be less sensible at my age than yours; yet I own I am so far affected by this, that I have need of all my philosophy to support it. However, let me beg of you not to indulge in useless grief, to the prejudice of your health, which is so necessary to your family. Everything may turn out better than you expect. We see so darkly into futurity, we never know when we have a real cause to rejoice or lament. The worst appearances have often happy consequences, as the best lead many times into the greatest misfortunes. Human prudence is very straitly bounded. What is most in our

¹ This letter has been dated in previous editions, "Lovere, Aug. 20, 1752." The original has no date.—T.

power, though little so, is the disposition of our own minds. Do not give way to melancholy; seek amusements; be willing to be diverted, and insensibly you will become so. Weak people only place a merit in affliction. A grateful remembrance, and whatever honour we can pay to their memory, is all that is owing to the dead. Tears and sorrow are no duties to them, and make us incapable of those we owe to the living.

I give you thanks for your care of my books. I yet retain, and carefully cherish, my taste for reading. If relays of eyes were to be hired like post-horses, I would never admit any but silent companions: they afford a constant variety of entertainment, and is almost the only one pleasing in the enjoyment, and inoffensive in the consequence. I am sorry your sight will not permit you a great use of it: the prattle of your little ones, and the friendship of Lord Bute, will supply the place of it. My dear child, endeavour to raise your spirits, and believe this advice comes from the tenderness of

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments and sincere condolence to Lord Bute.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Jan. 28, N.S. [1753].

DEAR CHILD,—You have given me a great deal of satisfaction by your account of your eldest daughter. I am particularly pleased to hear she is a good arithmetician; it is the best proof of understanding: the knowledge of numbers is one of the chief distinctions between us and the brutes. If there is anything in blood, you may reasonably expect your children should be endowed with an uncommon share of good sense. Mr. Wortley's family and mine have both produced some of the greatest men that have been born in England: I mean Admiral Sandwich, and my grandfather, who was distinguished by the name of Wise William.¹ I have heard Lord Bute's father mentioned as an extraordinary genius, though he had not many opportunities of showing it; and his uncle,

¹ William Pierrepont, second son of Robert Earl of Kingston, died 1679, aged seventy-one.—D.

the present Duke of Argyll,¹ has one of the best heads I ever knew. I will therefore speak to you as supposing Lady Mary not only capable, but desirous of learning: in that case by all means let her be indulged in it. You will tell me I did not make it a part of your education: your prospect was very different from hers. As you had no defect either in mind or person to hinder, and much in your circumstances to attract, the highest offers, it seemed your business to learn how to live in the world, as it is hers to know how to be easy out of it. It is the common error of builders and parents to follow some plan they think beautiful (and perhaps is so), without considering that nothing is beautiful that is displaced. Hence we see so many edifices raised that the raisers can never inhabit, being too large for their fortunes. Vistas are laid open over barren heaths, and apartments contrived for a coolness very agreeable in Italy, but killing in the north of Britain: thus every woman endeavours to breed her daughter a fine lady, qualifying her for a station in which she will never appear, and at the same time incapacitating her for that retirement to which she is destined. Learning, if she has a real taste for it, will not only make her contented, but happy in it. No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. She will not want new fashions, nor regret the loss of expensive diversions, or variety of company, if she can be amused with an author in her closet. To render this amusement extensive, she should be permitted to learn the languages. I have heard it lamented that boys lose so many years in mere learning of words: this is no objection to a girl, whose time is not so precious: she cannot advance herself in any profession, and has therefore more hours to spare; and as you say her memory is good, she will be very agreeably employed this way. There are two cautions to be given on this subject: first, not to think herself learned when she can read Latin, or even Greek. Languages are more properly to be called vehicles of learning than learning itself, as may be observed in

¹ The Duke of Argyll here mentioned was Archibald, who, before he succeeded his brother, John Duke of Argyll, in the dukedom, was Earl of Islay.—W.

many schoolmasters, who, though perhaps critics in grammar, are the most ignorant fellows upon earth. True knowledge consists in knowing things, not words. I would wish her no further a linguist than to enable her to read books in their originals, that are often corrupted, and always injured, by translations. Two hours' application every morning will bring this about much sooner than you can imagine, and she will have leisure enough besides to run over the English poetry, which is a more important part of a woman's education than it is generally supposed. Many a young damsel has been ruined by a fine copy of verses, which she would have laughed at if she had known it had been stolen from Mr. Waller. I remember, when I was a girl, I saved one of my companions from destruction, who communicated to me an epistle she was quite charmed with. As she had a natural good taste, she observed the lines were not so smooth as Prior's or Pope's, but had more thought and spirit than any of theirs. She was wonderfully delighted with such a demonstration of her lover's sense and passion, and not a little pleased with her own charms, that had force enough to inspire such elegancies. In the midst of this triumph I showed her that they were taken from Randolph's poems, and the unfortunate transcriber was dismissed with the scorn he deserved. To say truth, the poor plagiarist was very unlucky to fall into my hands; that author being no longer in fashion, would have escaped any one of less universal reading than myself. You should encourage your daughter to talk over with you what she reads; and, as you are very capable of distinguishing, take care she does not mistake pert folly for wit and humour, or rhyme for poetry, which are the common errors of young people, and have a train of ill consequences. The second caution to be given her (and which is most absolutely necessary) is to conceal whatever learning she attains, with as much solicitude as she would hide crookedness or lameness; the parade of it can only serve to draw on her the envy, and consequently the most inveterate hatred, of all her and she fools, which will certainly be at least three parts in four of all her acquaintance. The use of

knowledge in our sex, besides the amusement of solitude, is to moderate the passions, and learn to be contented with a small expense, which are the certain effects of a studious life; and it may be preferable even to that fame which men have engrossed to themselves, and will not suffer us to share. You will tell me I have not observed this rule myself; but you are mistaken: it is only inevitable accident that has given me any reputation that way. I have always carefully avoided it, and ever thought it a misfortune. The explanation of this paragraph would occasion a long digression, which I will not trouble you with, it being my present design only to say what I think useful for the instruction of my granddaughter, which I have much at heart. If she has the same inclination (I should say passion) for learning that I was born with, history, geography, and philosophy will furnish her with materials to pass away cheerfully a longer life than is allotted to mortals. I believe there are few heads capable of making Sir I. Newton's calculations, but the result of them is not difficult to be understood by a moderate capacity. Do not fear this should make her affect the character of Lady —, or Lady —, or Mrs. —: ¹ those women are ridiculous, not because they have learning, but because they have it not. One thinks herself a complete historian, after reading Echard's Roman History; another a profound philosopher, having got by heart some of Pope's unintelligible essays; and a third an able divine, on the strength of Whitefield's sermons: thus you hear them screaming politics and controversy.

It is a saying of Thucydides, ignorance is bold, and knowledge reserved. Indeed, it is impossible to be far advanced in it without being more humbled by a conviction of human ignorance, than elated by learning. At the same time I recommend books, I neither exclude work nor drawing. I think it as scandalous for a woman not to know how to use a needle, as for a man not to know how to use a sword. I was once extreme fond of my pencil, and it was a great mortification to me when my father turned off my master, having made a

¹ The blanks are in the original.—T.

considerable progress for a short time I learnt. My over-eagerness in the pursuit of it had brought a weakness on my eyes, that made it necessary to leave it off; and all the advantage I got was the improvement of my hand. I see, by hers, that practice will make her a ready writer: she may attain it by serving you for a secretary, when your health or affairs make it troublesome to you to write yourself; and custom will make it an agreeable amusement to her. She cannot have too many for that station of life which will probably be her fate. The ultimate end of your education was to make you a good wife (and I have the comfort to hear that you are one): hers ought to be, to make her happy in a virgin state. I will not say it is happier; but it is undoubtedly safer than any marriage. In a lottery, where there are (at the lowest computation) ten thousand blanks to a prize, it is the most prudent choice not to venture. I have always been so thoroughly persuaded of this truth, that, notwithstanding the flattering views I had for you (as I never intended you a sacrifice to my vanity), I thought I owed you the justice to lay before you all the hazards attending matrimony: you may recollect I did so in the strongest manner. Perhaps you may have more success in the instructing your daughter: she has so much company at home, she will not need seeking it abroad, and will more readily take the notions you think fit to give her. As you were alone in my family, it would have been thought a great cruelty to suffer you no companions of your own age, especially having so many near relations, and I do not wonder their opinions influenced yours. I was not sorry to see you not determined on a single life, knowing it was not your father's intention, and contented myself with endeavouring to make your home so easy that you might not be in haste to leave it.

I am afraid you will think this a very long and insignificant letter. I hope the kindness of the design will excuse it, being willing to give you every proof in my power that I am

Your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 6 [1753].

I CANNOT help writing a sort of apology for my last letter, foreseeing that you will think it wrong, or at least Lord Bute will be extremely shocked at the proposal of a learned education for daughters, which the generality of men believe as great a profanation as the clergy would do if the laity should presume to exercise the functions of the priesthood. I desire you would take notice, I would not have learning enjoined them as a task, but permitted as a pleasure, if their genius leads them naturally to it. I look upon my granddaughters as a sort of lay nuns: destiny may have laid up other things for them, but they have no reason to expect to pass their time otherwise than their aunts do at present; and I know, by experience, it is in the power of study not only to make solitude tolerable, but agreeable. I have now lived almost seven years in a stricter retirement than yours in the Isle of Bute, and can assure you, I have never had half an hour heavy on my hands, for want of something to do. Whoever will cultivate their own mind, will find full employment. Every virtue does not only require great care in the planting, but as much daily solicitude in cherishing, as exotic fruits and flowers. The vices and passions (which I am afraid are the natural product of the soil) demand perpetual weeding. Add to this the search after knowledge (every branch of which is entertaining), and the longest life is too short for the pursuit of it; which, though in some regards confined to very strait limits, leaves still a vast variety of amusements to those capable of tasting them, which is utterly impossible for those that are blinded by prejudices which are the certain effect of an ignorant education. My own was one of the worst in the world, being exactly the same as *Clarissa Harlowe's*; her pious Mrs. Norton so perfectly resembling my governess, who had been nurse to my mother, I could almost fancy the author was acquainted with her. She took so much pains, from my infancy, to fill my head with superstitious tales and false

notions, it was none of her fault I am not at this day afraid of witches and hobgoblins, or turned methodist. Almost all girls are bred after this manner. I believe you are the only woman (perhaps I might say, person) that never was either frightened or cheated into anything by your parents. I can truly affirm, I never deceived anybody in my life, excepting (which I confess has often happened undesignedly) by speaking plainly; as Earl Stanhope used to say (during his ministry) he always imposed on the foreign ministers by telling them the naked truth, which, as they thought impossible to come from the mouth of a statesman, they never failed to write informations to their respective courts directly contrary to the assurances he gave them: most people confounding the ideas of sense and cunning, though there are really no two things in nature more opposite: it is, in part, from this false reasoning, the unjust custom prevails of debarring our sex from the advantages of learning, the men fancying the improvement of our understandings would only furnish us with more art to deceive them, which is directly contrary to the truth. Fools are always enterprising, not seeing the difficulties of deceit, or the ill consequences of detection. I could give many examples of ladies whose ill conduct has been very notorious, which has been owing to that ignorance which has exposed them to idleness, which is justly called the mother of mischief. There is nothing so like the education of a woman of quality as that of a prince: they are taught to dance, and the exterior part of what is called good breeding, which, if they attain, they are extraordinary creatures in their kind, and have all the accomplishments required by their directors. The same characters are formed by the same lessons, which inclines me to think (if I dare say it) that nature has not placed us in an inferior rank to men, no more than the females of other animals, where we see no distinction of capacity; though, I am persuaded, if there was a commonwealth of rational horses (as Doctor Swift has supposed), it would be an established maxim among them, that a mare could not be taught to pace. I could add a great deal on this

subject, but I am not now endeavouring to remove the prejudices of mankind; my only design is, to point out to my granddaughters the method of being contented with that retreat, to which probably their circumstances will oblige them, and which is perhaps preferable to all the show of public life. It has always been my inclination. Lady Stafford (who knew me better than anybody else in the world, both from her own just discernment, and my heart being ever as open to her as myself) used to tell me, my true vocation was a monastery; and I now find, by experience, more sincere pleasures with my books and garden, than all the flutter of a court could give me.

If you follow my advice in relation to Lady Mary, my correspondence may be of use to her; and I shall very willingly give her those instructions that may be necessary in the pursuit of her studies. Before her age I was in the most regular commerce with my grandmother, though the difference of our time of life was much greater, she being past forty-five when she married my grandfather. She died at ninety-six, retaining, to the last, the vivacity and clearness of her understanding, which was very uncommon. You cannot remember her, being then in your nurse's arms.¹ I conclude with repeating to you, I only recommend, but am far from commanding, which I think I have no right to do. I tell you my sentiments, because you desired to know them, and hope you will receive them with some partiality, as coming from

Your most affectionate mother.

I have asked you over and over if you have received my letter to my sister Mar?

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 16, N.S., 1753.

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of December 20th this morning, which gave me great pleasure, by the account of your good health, and that of your father. I know nothing

¹ Lady Mary alludes to her maternal grandmother, Mary Countess Dowager of Denbigh. Her death is recorded in Brockwel's Chronological History for 1719, under date of December 9. Lady Bute was then not two years old.—T.

else could give me any at present, being sincerely afflicted for the death of the Doge.¹ He is lamented here by all ranks of people, as their common parent. He really answered the idea of Lord Bolingbroke's imaginary Patriot Prince, and was the only example I ever knew of having passed through the greatest employments, and most important negotiations, without ever making an enemy. When I was at Venice, which was some months before his election, he was the leading voice in the senate, and possessed of so strong a popularity as would have been dangerous in the hands of a bad man : yet he had the art to silence envy ; and I never once heard an objection to his character, or even an insinuation to his disadvantage. I attribute this peculiar happiness to be owing to the sincere benevolence of his heart, joined with an easy cheerfulness of temper, which made him agreeable to all companies, and a blessing to all his dependents. Authority appeared so *aimable* in him, no one wished it less, except himself, who would sometimes lament the weight of it, as robbing him too much of the conversation of his friends, in which he placed his chief delight, being so little ambitious, that (to my certain knowledge), far from caballing to gain that elevation to which he was raised, he would have refused it, if he had not looked upon the acceptance of it as a duty due to his country. This is only speaking of him in the public light. As to myself, he always professed, and gave me every demonstration of, the most cordial friendship. Indeed, I received every good office from him I could have expected from a tender father, or a kind brother ; and though I have not seen him since my last return to Italy, he never omitted an opportunity of expressing the greatest regard for me, both in his discourse to others, and upon all occasions where he thought he could be useful to me. I do not doubt I shall very sensibly miss the influence of his good intentions.

You will think I dwell too long on this melancholy subject. I will turn to one widely different, in taking notice of the dress of you London ladies, who, I find, take up the Italian

¹ Pietro Grimani died 1752. He was elected Doge of Venice in 1741, and was succeeded by Francesco Loredano.—D.

fashion of going in your hair: it is here only the custom of the peasants and the unmarried women of quality, excepting in the heat of summer, when any cap would be almost insupportable. I have often smiled to myself in viewing our assemblies (which they call conversations) at Lovere, the gentlemen being all in light nightcaps and nightgowns (under which, I am informed, they wear no breeches) and slippers, and the ladies in their stays and smock-sleeves, tied with ribands, and a single lutestring petticoat: there is not a hat or a hoop to be seen. It is true this dress is called *vestimenti di confidenza*, and they do not appear in it in town, but in their own chambers, and that only during the summer months.

My paper admonishes me to conclude, by assuring you that I am ever

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to my G. [Grand] children. You will send me Lord Orrery and Lord Bolingbroke's books.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

April 2, N.S. [1753].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am very glad to hear of your health and recovery, being always uneasy till your danger is over. I wish you joy of your young son,¹ and that you may have comfort in your numerous family.

I am not surprised to hear the Duke of Kingston remains unmarried: he is, I fear, surrounded with people whose interest it is he should continue so. I desire to know the name of his present inclination. By the manner you speak of it, I suppose there is no occasion of the nicety of avoiding her name. I am sorry the P. [Prince]² has an episcopal education:

¹ Charles, afterwards Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Stuart, born in January, 1753.—T.

² Afterwards George the Third. Lady Bute had probably informed Lady Mary of the resignation of the Bishop of Norwich as preceptor to the prince. Lord Waldegrave (Memoirs, 4to, 1821, p. 36) says: "The Earl of Harcourt and the Bishop of Norwich were soon disgraced, because they attempted to form an interest independent of the mother, and presumed, on some occasions, to have an opinion of their own." The bishop was succeeded immediately afterwards by Dr. John Thomas, Bishop of Peterborough, and afterwards Bishop of Salisbury. See Dodington's Diary, under date of January 9, 1753.—T.

he cannot have a worse, both for himself and the nation : though the court of England is no more personally to me than the court of Pekin, yet I cannot help some concern for my native country, nor can I see any good purpose from Church precepts, except they design him to take orders. I confess, if I was king of Great Britain, I would certainly be also archbishop of Canterbury ; but I believe that is a refinement of politics that will never enter into the heads of our managers, though there is no other way of having supreme power in church and state. I could say a great deal in favour of this idea ; but, as neither you nor I will ever be consulted on the subject, I will not trouble you with my speculative notions.

I am very much pleased to hear of your father's good health. That every blessing may attend you is the earnest and sincere wish of, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

June 3, N.S. [1753].

MY DEAR CHILD,—You see I was not mistaken in supposing we should have disputes concerning your daughters, if we were together, since we can differ even at this distance. The sort of learning that I recommended is not so expensive, either of time or money, as dancing, and in my opinion likely to be of much more use to Lady M. [Mary], if her memory and apprehension are what you represented them to me. However, every one has a right to educate their children after their own way, and I shall speak no more on that subject. I was so much pleased with the character you gave her, that, had there been any possibility of her undertaking so long a journey, I should certainly have asked for her ; and I think out of such a number you might have spared her. I own my affection prevailed over my judgment in this thought, since nothing can be more imprudent than undertaking the management of another's child. I verily believe that, had I carried six daughters out of England with me, I could have disposed of

them all advantageously. The winter I passed at Rome there was an unusual concourse of English, many of them with great estates, and their own masters: as they had no admittance to the Roman ladies, nor understood the language, they had no way of passing their evenings but in my apartment, where I had always a full drawing-room. Their governors encouraged their assiduities as much as they could, finding I gave them lessons of economy and good conduct; and my authority was so great, it was a common threat amongst them, I'll tell Lady Mary what you say. I was judge of all their disputes, and my decisions always submitted to. While I stayed, there was neither gaming, drinking, quarrelling, or keeping. The Abbé Grant (a very honest, good natured North Briton, who has resided several years at Rome) was so much amazed at this uncommon regularity, he would have made me believe I was bound in conscience to pass my life there, for the good of my countrymen. I can assure you my vanity was not at all raised by this influence over them, knowing very well that had Lady Charlotte de Roussi¹ been in my place, it would have been the same thing. There is that general emulation in mankind, I am fully persuaded if a dozen young fellows bred a bear amongst them, and saw no other creature, they would every day fall out for the bear's favours, and be extremely flattered by any mark of distinction shown by that ugly animal. Since my last return to Italy, which is now near seven years,² I have lived in solitude not unlike that of Robinson Crusoe, excepting my short trips to Lovere: my whole time is spent in my closet and garden, without regretting any conversation but that of my own family. The study of

¹ Lady Charlotte de Roussi was a Mademoiselle de Roussi, an unmarried woman of noble birth, who became a refugee from adhering to her religion. As this was the case with few of the French people of distinction, our court took her under its particular protection, and gave her the rank of an earl's daughter. At the time Lady Mary thus mentioned her she was a very *good* old lady, but not very brilliant.—W. She was governess to the children of George the Second. Her father, Count de Roussi, was a French Protestant refugee, and was created Earl of Lifford. Lord Hervey alludes to her in his Poetical Epistle to the Queen:

"Charlotte and Schutz like angry monkeys chatter,
None guessing what's the language or the matter."—T.

² Lady Mary left Avignon in August, 1746.—T.

simples is a new amusement to me. I have no correspondence with anybody at London but yourself and your father, whom I have not heard from for a long time. I am much mortified that the post (or perhaps my own servants) take so little care of my letters. By your account there are at least four of mine lost and some of yours. I have only received a few lines from you since you lay in, till this morning. I have often asked you if you have had the letter I enclosed for my sister Mar? I have wrote to Lord Bute and to my granddaughter, of which you take no notice, which makes me fear they have miscarried. My best wishes attend you and yours, being with great truth

Your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Lovere] July 23, N.S. [1753].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have just received two letters from you, though the dates are a month distant. The death of Lady Carolina¹ naturally raises the mortifying reflection, on how slender a thread hangs all worldly prosperity! I cannot say I am otherwise much touched at it. It is true she was my sister, as it were in some sense; but her behaviour to me never gave me any love, nor her general conduct any esteem. The confounding of all ranks, and making a jest of order, has long been growing in England; and I perceive, by the books you sent me, has made a very considerable progress. The heroes and heroines of the age are cobblers and kitchen wenches. Perhaps you will say, I should not take my ideas of the manners of the times from such trifling authors; but it is more truly to be found among them, than from any historian: as they write merely to get money, they always fall into the notions that are most acceptable to the present taste. It has

¹ Lady Carolina Pierrepont, married to Thomas Brand, Esq., of the Hoo in Hertfordshire, grandfather of the present [1837] Lord Dacre.—W. Horace Walpole, writing to George Montagu, June 11, 1753, says: "Poor Lady Caroline Brand is dead of a rheumatic fever, and her husband as miserable a man as ever he was a cheerful one. I grieve much for her, and pity him. They were infinitely happy, and lived in the most perfect friendship I ever saw." Walpole repeatedly refers to their happy marriage.—T.

long been the endeavour of our English writers to represent people of quality as the vilest and silliest part of the nation, being (generally) very low-born themselves. I am not surprised at their propagating this doctrine; but I am much mistaken if this levelling principle does not, one day or other, break out in fatal consequences to the public, as it has already done in many private families. You will think I am influenced by living under an aristocratic government, where distinction of rank is carried to a very great height; but I can assure you my opinion is founded on reflection and experience, and I wish to God I had always thought in the same manner; though I had ever the utmost contempt for misalliances, yet the silly prejudices of my education had taught me to believe I was to treat nobody as an inferior, and that poverty was a degree of merit: this imaginary humility has made me admit many familiar acquaintances, of which I have heartily repented every one, and the greatest examples I have known of honour and integrity have been among those of the highest birth and fortunes. There are many reasons why it should be so, which I will not trouble you with. If my letter was to be published, I know I should be railed at for pride, and called an enemy of the poor; but I take a pleasure in telling you my real thoughts. I would willingly establish the most intimate friendship between us, and I am sure no proof of it shall ever be wanting on my side.

I am sorry for the untimely death of poor Lord Cornbury;¹ he had certainly a very good heart: I have often thought it great pity it was not under the direction of a better head. I had lost his favour some time before I left England on a pleasant account. He comes to me one morning with a hat full of paper, which he desired me to peruse, and tell him my sincere opinion: I trembled at the proposition, foreseeing the inevitable consequence of this confidence. However, I was

¹ Lord Cornbury died in Paris in May, 1753, in consequence of a fall from a horse. He was the friend of Pope, to whom the latter alludes in the lines:

“Would you be blest? despise low joys, low gains;
Disdain whatever Cornbury disdains;
Be virtuous and be happy for your pains.”—T.

not so barbarous to tell him that his verses were extreme stupid (as God knows they were), and that he was no more inspired with the spirit of poetry than that of prophecy. I contented myself with representing to him, in the mildest terms, that it was not the business of a man of quality to turn author, and that he should confine himself to the applause of his friends, and by no means venture on the press. He seemed to take this advice with good humour, promised to follow it, and we parted without any dispute; but, alas! he could not help showing his performance to better judges, who with their usual candour and good nature, earnestly exhorted him to oblige the world with this instructive piece, which was soon after published, and had the success I expected from it, and Pope persuaded him, poor soul! that my declaiming against it occasioned the ill reception it met with, though this is the first time I ever mentioned it in my life, and I did not so much as guess the reason I heard of him no more, till a few days before I left London. I accidentally said to one of his acquaintance his visits to me were at an end, I knew not why; and I was let into this weighty secret. My journey prevented all explanation between us, and perhaps I should not have thought it worth any, if I had stayed. I am not surprised he has left nothing to the D. [Duchess] of Q. [Queensberry],¹ knowing he had no value for her, though I never heard him name her: but he was of that species of mankind, who, without designing it, discover all they think to any observer that converses with them. His desire of fixing his name to a certain quantity of wall, is one instance, among thousands, of the passion men have for perpetuating their memory: this weakness (I call every sentiment so that cannot be defended by reason) is so universal, it may be looked on as instinct; and as no instinct is implanted but to some purpose, I could almost incline to an opinion, which was professed by several of the fathers, and adopted by some of the best French divines, that the punishment of the next life consists not only in the con-

¹ She was Lord Cornbury's sister.—W.

tinuance, but the redoubling our attachment for this, in a more intense manner than we can now have any notion of. These reflections would carry me very far: for your comfort, my paper is at an end, and I have scarce room to tell you a truth which admits of no doubt, that I am

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to my G. [Grand] children. I have wrote to Lady Mary. Have you received that addressed to my sister Mar?

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Lovere, Sept. 10, O.S. [1753].

DEAR CHILD,—I am much obliged to your father for showing you my letter, being persuaded he meant kindly to me, though it was not wrote with the intention of being shown; it is not the first time I have made him the same declaration of my opinion of Lord Bute's character, which has ever been my sentiment; and had I thought differently I would never have given my consent to your marriage, notwithstanding your inclination; to which, however, I thought it just to pay a great regard. I have seldom been mistaken in my first judgment of those I thought it worth while to consider; and when (which has happened too often) flattery or the persuasion of others has made me alter it, time has never failed to show me I had done better to have remained fixed in my first (which is ever the most unprejudiced) idea. My health is so often disordered, that I begin to be as weary of it as mending old lace; when it is patched in one place it breaks in another. I can expect nothing better at my time of life, and will not trouble you with talking any more about it.

If the new servant of the princess is the Miss Pitt¹ I knew, I am sorry for it. I am afraid I know her very well; and yet

¹ Mrs. Anne Pitt, sister of the first Lord Chatham, whom she strikingly resembled in features and in ability. She was a particular friend of Lady Bute's; but their intimacy had scarcely begun when she obtained the place of Privy purse to the Princess Dowager of Wales.—W.

I fancy 'tis a younger sister, since you call her Anne, and I think the name of my acquaintance was Mary; she, I mean, left France a short time before I went thither. I have some curiosity to know how pious Lady Ferrers¹ behaves to her new daughter-in-law. My letter is cut short by company; they wait while I tell you I am always

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to the little ones, who I hope are recovered by this time of their distemper.

I recollect myself; I was mistaken in Mrs. Pitt's name, it is Anne; she has wit, but——² [*sic*]

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Oct. 10 [1753].

THIS letter will be very dull or very peevish (perhaps both). I am at present much out of humour, being on the edge of a quarrel with my friend and patron, the C.³ He is really a good natured and generous man, and spends his vast revenue in (what he thinks) the service of his country, besides contributing largely to the building of a new cathedral, which, when finished, will stand in the rank of fine churches (where he has

¹ Selina, daughter of George Finch, and widow of the first Earl Ferrers. The marriage of her son, Mr. Shirley, to the notorious Lady Orford, has already been alluded to.—T.

² Lady Mary's "but——" probably refers to Miss Pitt's notorious impetuosity of temper. Horace Walpole gives the following account of her (*Memoirs of the Reign of King George the Third*, i. 85): "She had been maid of honour to Queen Caroline, and was warmly attached to her brother, with whom she lived. On his promotion to the Pay-office he had shaken her off in an unbecoming manner. She had excellent parts and strong passions. Lord Bolingbroke had recommended her to the late prince, on whose death she had been made Privy purse to the princess; but, being of an intriguing and most ambitious nature, she soon destroyed her own prospect by an impetuosity to govern her mistress, and by embarking in other cabals at that court. Her disgrace followed, but without dismissal; on which she had retired to France. On her return, though she could never recover the favour of the princess, she so successfully cultivated the patronage of Lord and Lady Bute, that she kept her ground at Leicester-fields, and obtained a large pension. This she had notified by letter to her brother. He had coldly replied, that he congratulated her on the addition to her fortune, but was grieved to see the name of Pitt in a list of pensions. On his accepting one, she copied his own letter, turning it against himself, and though restrained by her friends from sending it to him, she repeated what she had done till it became the common talk of the town. She afterwards turned Catholic, and died insane.—T.

³ The Cardinal Querini. See *post*, p. 272.—T.

already the comfort of seeing his own busto), finely done both within and without. He has founded a magnificent college for one hundred scholars, which I don't doubt he will endow very nobly, and greatly enlarged and embellished his episcopal palace. He has joined to it a public library, which, when I saw it, was a very beautiful room: it is now finished and furnished, and open twice in a week with proper attendance. Yesterday here arrived one of his chief chaplains, with a long compliment, which concluded with desiring I would send him my works; having dedicated one of his cases to English books, he intended my labours should appear in the most conspicuous place. I was struck dumb for some time with this astonishing request; when I recovered my vexatious surprise (foreseeing the consequence), I made answer, I was highly sensible of the honour designed me, but, upon my word, I had never printed a single line in my life. I was answered in a cold tone, his eminence could send for them to England, but they would be a long time coming, and with some hazard; and that he had flattered himself I would not refuse him such a favour, and I need not be ashamed of seeing my name in a collection where he admitted none but the most eminent authors. It was to no purpose to endeavour to convince him. He would not stay dinner, though earnestly invited; and went away with the air of one that thought he had reason to be offended. I know his master will have the same sentiments, and I shall pass in his opinion for a monster of ingratitude, while it is the blackest of vices in my opinion, and of which I am utterly incapable—I really could cry for vexation.

Sure nobody ever had such various provocations to print as myself. I have seen things I have wrote, so mangled and falsified, I have scarce known them. I have seen poems I never read, published with my name at length; and others, that were truly and singly wrote by me, printed under the names of others. I have made myself easy under all these mortifications, by the reflection I did not deserve them, having never aimed at the vanity of popular applause; but I own my

philosophy is not proof against losing a friend, and it may be making an enemy of one to whom I am obliged.

I confess I have often been complimented, since I have been in Italy, on the books I have given the public. I used at first to deny it with some warmth; but, finding I persuaded nobody, I have of late contented myself with laughing whenever I heard it mentioned, knowing the character of a learned woman is far from being ridiculous in this country, the greatest families being proud of having produced female writers; and a Milanese lady being now professor of mathematics in the university of Bologna, invited thither by a most obliging letter, wrote by the present Pope, who desired her to accept of the chair, not as a recompense for her merit, but to do honour to a town which is under his protection. To say truth, there is no part of the world where our sex is treated with so much contempt as in England. I do not complain of men for having engrossed the government: in excluding us from all degrees of power, they preserve us from many fatigues, many dangers, and perhaps many crimes. The small proportion of authority that has fallen to my share (only over a few children and servants) has always been a burden, and never a pleasure, and I believe every one finds it so who acts from a maxim (I think an indispensable duty), that whoever is under my power is under my protection. Those who find a joy in inflicting hardships, and seeing objects of misery, may have other sensations; but I have always thought corrections, even when necessary, as painful to the giver as to the sufferer, and am therefore very well satisfied with the state of subjection we are placed in: but I think it the highest injustice to be debarred the entertainment of my closet, and that the same studies which raise the character of a man should hurt that of a woman. We are educated in the grossest ignorance, and no art omitted to stifle our natural reason; if some few get above their nurses' instructions, our knowledge must rest concealed, and be as useless to the world as gold in the mine. I am now speaking according to our English notions, which may wear out, some ages hence, along with others equally

absurd. It appears to me the strongest proof of a clear understanding in Longinus (in every light acknowledged one of the greatest men among the ancients), when I find him so far superior to vulgar prejudices as to choose his two examples of fine writing from a Jew (at that time the most despised people upon earth) and a woman. Our modern wits would be so far from quoting, they would scarce own they had read the works of such contemptible creatures, though, perhaps, they would condescend to steal from them, at the same time they declared they were below their notice. This subject is apt to run away with me; I will trouble you with no more of it.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours, which are truly dear to

Your most affectionate mother.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Oct. 10, N.S. [1753].

I THINK I now know why our correspondence is so miserably interrupted, and so many of my letters lost to and from England; but I am no happier in the discovery than a man that has found out his complaints proceed from a stone in the kidneys; I know the cause, but am entirely ignorant of the remedy, and must suffer my uneasiness with what patience I can.

An old priest made me a visit as I was folding my last packet to my daughter. Observing it to be large, he told me I had done a great deal of business that morning. I made answer, I had done no business at all; I had only wrote to my daughter on family affairs, or such trifles as make up women's conversation. He said gravely, people like your excellenza do not use to write long letters upon trifles. I assured him, that if he understood English, I would let him read my letter. He replied, with a mysterious smile, if I did understand English, I should not understand what you have written, except you would give me the key, which I durst not presume to ask. What key? (said I, staring) there is not one cypher besides the date. He answered, cyphers were only used

by novices in politics, and it was very easy to write intelligibly, under feigned names of persons and places, to a correspondent, in such a manner as should be almost impossible to be understood by anybody else.

Thus I suppose my innocent epistles are severely scrutinised: and when I talk of my grandchildren, they are fancied to represent all the potentates of Europe. This is very provoking. I confess there are good reasons for extraordinary caution at this juncture; but 'tis very hard I cannot pass for being as insignificant as I really am.

The house at Acton was certainly left to Lady Carolina; and whatever Lady Anne¹ left [is] so little (when divided into five parts), it is not worth inquiring for, especially after so long silence. I heartily congratulate you on the recovery of your sight. It is a blessing I prefer to life, and will seek for glasses whenever I am in a place where they are sold.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Nov. 27, N.S. [1753].

DEAR CHILD,—By the account you give me of London, I think it very much reformed; at least you have one sin the less, and it was a very reigning one in my time, I mean scandal: it must be literally reduced to a whisper, since the custom of living all together. I hope it has also banished the fashion of talking all at once, which was very prevailing when I was in town, and may perhaps contribute to brotherly love and unity, which was so much declined in my memory, that it was hard to invite six people that would not, by cold looks, or piquing reflections, affront one another. I suppose parties are at an end, though I fear it is the consequence of the old almanac prophecy, "Poverty brings peace;" and I fancy you really follow the French mode, and the lady keeps an assembly, that the assembly may keep the lady, and card money pay for clothes and equipage, as well as cards and

¹ The daughters of Evelyn Duke of Kingston, by Lady Isabella Bentinck, his second wife. Lady Carolina Pierrepont died June 9, 1753. Lady Anne died in 1739, unmarried.—D.

candles. I find I should be as solitary in London as I am here in the country, it being impossible for me to submit to live in a *drum*, which I think so far from a cure of uneasiness, that it is, in my opinion, adding one more to the heap. There are so many attached to humanity, 'tis impossible to fly from them all; but experience has confirmed to me (what I always thought), that the pursuit of pleasure will be ever attended with pain, and the study of ease be most certainly accompanied with pleasures. I have had this morning as much delight in a walk in the sun as ever I felt formerly in the crowded Mall, even when I imagined I had my share of the admiration of the place, which was generally soured before I slept by the informations of my female friends, who seldom failed to tell me, it was observed, I had showed an inch above my shoe-heels, or some other criticism of equal weight, which was construed affectation, and utterly destroyed all the satisfaction my vanity had given me. I have now no other but in my little housewifery, which is easily gratified in this country, where, by the help of my receipt-book, I make a very shining figure among my neighbours, by the introduction of custards, cheesecakes, and minced pies, which were entirely unknown to these parts, and are received with universal applause; and I have reason to believe will preserve my memory even to future ages, particularly by the art of butter-making, in which I have so improved them, that they now make as good as in any part of England.

My paper is at an end, which I do not doubt you are glad of. I have hardly room for my compliments to Lord Bute, blessing to my grandchildren, and to assure you that I am ever

Your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

DEAR CHILD,—I have wrote you so many letters without any return, that if I loved you at all less than I do, I should certainly give over writing. I received a kind letter last post

from Lady Oxford, which gives me hopes I shall at length receive yours, being persuaded you have not neglected our correspondence, though I am not so happy to have the pleasure of it.

I have little to say from this solitude, having already sent you a description of my garden, which, with my books, takes up all my time. I made a small excursion last week to visit a nunnery twelve miles from hence, which is the only institution of the kind in all Italy. It is in a town in the state of Mantua, founded by a princess of the house of Gonzaga, one of whom (now very old) is the present abbess: they are dressed in black, and wear a thin cypress veil at the back of their heads, excepting which, they have no mark of a religious habit, being set out in their hair, and having no guimpe, but wearing *des collets montés*, for which I have no name in English, but you may have seen them in very old pictures, being in fashion both before and after ruffs. Their house is a very large handsome building, though not regular, every sister having liberty to build her own apartment to her taste, which consists of as many rooms as she pleases: they have each a separate kitchen, and keep cooks and what other servants they think proper, though there is a very fine public refectory: they are permitted to dine in private whenever they please. Their garden is very large, and the most adorned of any in these parts. They have no grates, and make what visits they will, always two together, and receive those of the men as well as ladies. I was accompanied when I went with all the nobility of the town, and they showed me all the house, without excluding the gentlemen; but what I think the most remarkable privilege is a country-house, which belongs to them, three miles from the town, where they pass every vintage, and at any time any four of them may take their pleasure there, for as many days as they choose. They seem to differ from the *chanoinesses* of Flanders only in their vow of celibacy. They take pensioners, but only those of quality. I saw here a niece of General Brown. Those that profess, are obliged to prove a descent as noble as the knights of Malta.

Upon the whole, I think it the most agreeable community I have seen, and their behaviour more decent than that of the cloistered nuns, who I have heard say themselves, that the grate permits all liberty of speech since it leaves them no other, and indeed they generally talk according to that maxim. My house at Avignon joined to a monastery, which gave me occasion to know a great deal of their conduct, which (though the convent of the best reputation in that town, where there is fourteen) was such, as I would as soon put a girl into the play-house for education-as send her among them.

My paper is at an end, and hardly leaves room for my compliments to Lord Bute, blessing to my grandchildren, and assurance to yourself of being

Your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

April 28, 1754.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am quite sick with vexation at the interruptions of our correspondence. I have sent you six letters since the date of the last which you say you have received; and three enclosed addressed to my sister [Lady Mar], none of which, you say, are arrived. I have had but two from you (including this of March 25) since October. You have had no loss further than in the testimonies of my real affection; my long stories of what passes here can be little entertainment to you; but everything from England is interesting to me, who lead the life, as I have already told you, of Robinson Crusoe; his goats and kids were as much his companions as any of the people I see here. My time is wholly dedicated to the care of a decaying body, and endeavouring, as the old song says, to grow wiser and better as my strength wears away. I have wrote two long letters to your father, to which I have had no answer, therefore suppose they have miscarried. I know not how to remedy this misfortune, and cannot help feeling it very sensibly.

I imagine the Duke of Newcastle¹ will soon have the treasurer's staff; the title of first commissioner is not equal to

¹ Appointed first lord of the treasury in March, 1754.—D.

his importance. You need not tell me how Mr. Pelham¹ has disposed his affairs. You should be particular in your relations. I am as ignorant of everything that passes in London, as if I inhabited the deserts of Africa. * * * *

The boxes you have been so kind to send me have been some time safely arrived at Venice, but are not yet come to my hands, greatly to my affliction. I wish you would send the other, or the season will be too far advanced. I am very glad of Lord Mountstuart's² recovery, and pity very much the pain you have suffered during his danger. It would be terrible to lose so agreeable a child. I dare not advise you to moderate your tenderness, finding it impossible to overcome my own, notwithstanding all my melancholy experience. This letter is incomparably dull. I cannot resolve to own it by setting my name to it. [Unsigned.]

My compliments to Lord Bute. God bless you and yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Lovere, June 23, N.S. [1754].

SOON after I wrote my last letter to my dear child, I was seized with so violent a fever, accompanied with so many bad symptoms, my life was despaired of by the physician of Gottolengo, and I prepared myself for death with as much resignation as that circumstance admits: some of my neighbours, without my knowledge, sent express for the doctor of this place, whom I have mentioned to you formerly as having uncommon secrets. I was surprised to see him at my bedside. He declared me in great danger, but did not doubt my recovery, if I was wholly under his care; and his first prescription was transporting me hither; the other physician asserted positively I should die on the road. It has always been my opinion that it is a matter of the utmost indifference where we expire, and I consented to be removed. My bed was placed on a brancard; my servants followed in chaises;

¹ Henry Pelham, Esq., died March 6, 1754. He had been appointed first lord of the treasury in November, 1743. He succeeded Samuel Lord Sandys.—D.

² First Marquis of Bute.—D.

and in this equipage I set out. I bore the first day's journey of fifteen miles without any visible alteration. The doctor said, as I was not worse, I was certainly better; and the next day proceeded twenty miles to Iséo, which is at the head of this lake. I lay each night at noblemen's houses, which were empty. My cook, with my physician, always preceded two or three hours, and I found my chamber, and all necessities, ready prepared with the exactest attention. I was put into a bark in my litter bed, and in three hours arrived here. My spirits were not at all wasted (I think rather raised) by the fatigue of my journey. I drank the water next morning, and, with a few doses of my physician's prescription, in three days found myself in perfect health, which appeared almost a miracle to all that saw me. You may imagine I am willing to submit to the orders of one that I must acknowledge the instrument of saving my life, though they are not entirely conformable to my will and pleasure. He has sentenced me to a long continuance here, which, he says, is absolutely necessary to the confirmation of my health, and would persuade me that my illness has been wholly owing to my omission of drinking the waters these two years past. I dare not contradict him, and must own he deserves (from the various surprising cures I have seen) the name given to him in this country of the miraculous man. Both his character and practice are so singular, I cannot forbear giving you some account of them. He will not permit his patients to have either surgeon or apothecary: he performs all the operations of the first with great dexterity; and whatever compounds he gives, he makes in his own house: those are very few; the juice of herbs, and these waters, being commonly his sole prescriptions. He has very little learning, and professes drawing all his knowledge from experience, which he possesses, perhaps, in a greater degree than any other mortal, being the seventh doctor of his family in a direct line. His forefathers have all of them left journals and registers solely for the use of their posterity, none of them having published anything; and he has recourse to these manuscripts on every difficult case, the veracity of which, at least, is un-

questionable. His vivacity is prodigious, and he is indefatigable in his industry: but what most distinguishes him is a disinterestedness I never saw in any other: he is as regular in his attendance on the poorest peasant, from whom he never can receive one farthing, as on the richest of the nobility; and, whenever he is wanted, will climb three or four miles in the mountains, in the hottest sun, or heaviest rain, where a horse cannot go, to arrive at a cottage, where, if their condition requires it, he does not only give them advice and medicines gratis, but bread, wine, and whatever is needful. There never passes a week without one or more of these expeditions. His last visit is generally to me. I often see him as dirty and tired as a foot post, having eat nothing all day but a roll or two that he carries in his pocket, yet blest with such a perpetual flow of spirits, he is always gay to a degree above cheerfulness. There is a peculiarity in his character that I hope will incline you to forgive my drawing it.

I have already described to you this extraordinary spot of earth, which is almost unknown to the rest of the world, and indeed does not seem to be destined by nature to be inhabited by human creatures, and I believe would never have been so, without the cruel civil war between the Guelphs and Ghibelines. Before that time here were only the huts of a few fishermen, who came at certain seasons on account of the fine fish with which this lake abounds, particularly trouts, as large and red as salmon. The lake itself is different from any other I ever saw or read of, being the colour of the sea, rather deeper tinged with green, which convinces me that the surrounding mountains are full of minerals, and it may be rich in mines yet undiscovered, as well as quarries of marble, from whence the churches and houses are ornamented, and even the streets paved, which, if polished and laid with art, would look like the finest mosaic work, being a variety of beautiful colours. I ought to retract the honourable title of street, none of them being broader than an alley, and impassable for any wheel carriage, except a wheelbarrow. This town (which is the largest of twenty-five that are built on the banks of the

lake) is near two miles long, and the figure of a semicircle. If it was a regular range of building, it would appear magnificent; but, being founded accidentally by those who sought a refuge from the violences of those bloody times, it is a mixture of shops and palaces, gardens and houses, which ascend a mile high, in a confusion which is not disagreeable. After this salutary water was found, and the purity of the air experienced, many people of quality chose it for their summer residence, and embellished it with several fine edifices. It was populous and flourishing, till that fatal plague which overran all Europe in the year 1626. It made a terrible ravage in this place: the poor were almost destroyed, and the rich deserted it. Since that time it has never recovered its former splendour; few of the nobility returned; it is now only frequented during the water-drinking season. Several of the ancient palaces [are] degraded into lodging-houses, and others stand empty in a ruinous condition: one of these I have bought. I see you lift up your eyes in wonder at my indiscretion. I beg you to hear my reasons before you condemn me. In my infirm state of health the unavoidable noise of a public lodging is very disagreeable; and here is no private one: secondly, and chiefly, the whole purchase is but one hundred pounds, with a very pretty garden in terraces down to the water, and a court behind the house. It is founded on a rock, and the walls so thick, they will probably remain as long as the earth. It is true, the apartments are in most tattered circumstances, without doors or windows. The beauty of the great saloon gained my affection: it is forty-two feet in length by twenty-five, proportionably high, opening into a balcony of the same length, with marble balusters: the ceiling and flooring are in good repair, but I have been forced to the expense of covering the wall with new stucco; and the carpenter is at this minute taking measure of the windows, in order to make frames for sashes. The great stairs are in such a declining way, it would be a very hazardous exploit to mount them: I never intend to attempt it. The state bed-chamber shall also remain for the sole use of the spiders that

have taken possession of it, along with the grand cabinet, and some other pieces of magnificence, quite useless to me, and which would cost a great deal to make habitable. I have fitted up six rooms, with lodgings for five servants, which are all I ever will have in this place; and I am persuaded that I could make a profit if I would part with my purchase, having been very much befriended in the sale, which was by auction, the owner having died without children, and I believe he had never seen this mansion in his life, it having stood empty from the death of his grandfather. The governor bid for me, and nobody would bid against him. Thus I am become a citizen of Lovere, to the great joy of the inhabitants, not (as they would pretend) from their respect for my person, but I perceive they fancy I shall attract all the travelling English; and, to say truth, the singularity of the place is well worth their curiosity; but, as I have no correspondents, I may be buried here fifty years, and nobody know anything of the matter.

I received the books you were so kind to send me, three days ago, but not the china, which I would not venture among the precipices that lead hither. I have only had time to read Lord Orrery's work,¹ which has extremely entertained, and not at all surprised me, having the honour of being acquainted with him, and know [*sic*] him for one of those dangles after wit, who, like those after beauty, spend their time in humbly admiring, and are happy in being permitted to attend, though they are laughed at, and only encouraged to gratify the insatiate vanity of those professed wits and beauties who aim at being publicly distinguished in those characters. D. [Dean] S. [Swift], by his lordship's own account, was so intoxicated with the love of flattery, he sought it amongst the lowest of people, and the silliest of women; and was never so well pleased with any companions as those that worshipped him while he insulted them. It is a wonderful condescension in a man of quality to offer his incense in such a crowd, and

¹ Lord Orrery's Remarks on the Life and Writings of Swift, published in 1751.
—T.



J. Bute

Engraved by W. Read, from the Original by Ramsay



think it an honour to share a friendship with Sheridan,¹ &c., especially being himself endowed with such universal merit as he displays in these Letters, where he shows that he is a poet, a patriot, a philosopher, a physician, a critic, a complete scholar, and most excellent moralist; shining in private life as a submissive son, a tender father, and zealous friend. His only error has been that love of learned ease which he has indulged in a solitude, which has prevented the world from being blest with such a general, minister, or admiral, being equal to any of these employments, if he would have turned his talents to the use of the public. Heaven be praised, he has now drawn his pen in its service, and given an example to mankind that the most villanous actions, nay, the coarsest nonsense, are only small blemishes in a great genius. I happen to think quite contrary, weak woman as I am. I have always avoided the conversation of those who endeavour to raise an opinion of their understanding by ridiculing what both law and decency obliges them to revere; but, whenever I have met with any of those bright spirits who would be smart on sacred subjects, I have ever cut short their discourse by asking them if they had any lights and revelations by which they would propose new articles of faith? Nobody can deny but religion is a comfort to the distressed, a cordial to the sick, and sometimes a restraint on the wicked; therefore, whoever would argue or laugh it out of the world, without giving some equivalent for it, ought to be treated as a common enemy: but, when this language comes from a churchman, who enjoys large benefices and dignities from that very Church he openly despises, it is an object of horror for which I want a name, and can only be excused by madness, which I think the Dean was always strongly touched with. His character seems to me a parallel with that of Caligula; and had he had the same power, would have made the same use of it. That emperor erected a temple to himself, where he was his own high-priest, preferred his horse to the highest honours in the state, professed enmity to [the] human race, and at last lost his life

¹ Dr. Thomas Sheridan, grandfather of R. Brinsley Sheridan.—D.

by a nasty jest on one of his inferiors, which I dare swear Swift would have made in his place. There can be no worse picture made of the Doctor's morals than he has given us himself in the letters printed by Pope. We see him vain, trifling, ungrateful to the memory of his patron, the E. [Earl] of Oxford, making a servile court where he had any interested views, and meanly abusive when they were disappointed, and, as he says (in his own phrase), flying in the face of mankind, in company with his adorer Pope. It is pleasant to consider, that, had it not been for the good nature of these very mortals they condemn, these two superior beings were entitled, by their birth and hereditary fortune, to be only a couple of link-boys. I am of opinion their friendship would have continued, though they had remained in the same kingdom: it had a very strong foundation—the love of flattery on one side, and the love of money on the other. Pope courted with the utmost assiduity all the old men from whom he could hope a legacy, the Duke of Buckingham, Lord Peterborough, Sir G. Kneller, Lord Bolingbroke, Mr. Wycherley, Mr. Congreve, Lord Harcourt,¹ &c., and I do not doubt projected to sweep the Dean's whole inheritance, if he could have persuaded him to throw up his deanery, and come [to] die in his house; and his general preaching against money was meant to induce people to throw it away, that he might pick it up. There cannot be a stronger proof of his being capable of any action for the sake of gain than publishing his literary correspondence, which lays open such a mixture of dulness and iniquity, that one would imagine it visible even to his most passionate admirers, if Lord O. [Orrery] did not show that smooth lines have as much influence over some people as the authority of the Church in these countries, where it cannot only veil, but sanctify any absurdity or villany whatever. It is remarkable that his lordship's family have been smatterers in wit and learning for three generations: his grandfather has left monuments of his

¹ Pope certainly cultivated the friendship of all these persons, but if he did so with the object Lady Mary attributes to him, he was singularly unfortunate. No one of them left him anything, unless Peterborough's dying gift of the watch presented to him by the King of Sardinia be an exception.—T.

good taste in several rhyming tragedies, and the romance of Parthenissa. His father began the world by giving his name to a treatise wrote by Atterbury and his club, which gained him great reputation; but (like Sir Martin Marall, who would fumble with his lute when the music was over) he published soon after a sad comedy of his own, and, what was worse, a dismal tragedy he had found among the first Earl of Orrery's papers.¹ People could easier forgive his being partial to his own silly works, as a common frailty, than the want of judgment in producing a piece that dishonoured his father's memory.

Thus fell into dust a fame that had made a blaze by borrowed fire. To do justice to the present lord, I do not doubt this fine performance is all his own, and is a public benefit, if every reader has been as well diverted with it as myself. I verily believe it has contributed to the establishment of my health.

I have wrote two long letters to your father, to which I have had no answer. I hope he is well. The prosperity of you and yours is the warmest wish of, my dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

This letter is of a horrible length; I dare not read it over. I should have told you (to justify my folly as far as I can), here is no ground-rent to be paid, taxes for church and poor, or any imposition whatever, on houses. I desire in your next parcel you would send me *Lady Frail*,² the *Adventures of G. Edwards*,³ and the *Life of Lord Stair*, which I suppose very superficial, and partly fictitious; but, as he was my acquaintance, I have some curiosity to see how he is represented.

¹ *Altemira*, a tragedy, written by the Right Honourable Roger late Earl of Orrery; and revised by the Honourable Charles Boyle [afterwards Earl of Orrery]. 8vo. London: J. Nutt, 1702. The prologue was written by Henry St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke. The play was performed at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn-fields, Betterton playing one of the characters.—T.

² Alluding not to Smollett's novel, but to a pamphlet so entitled.—T.

³ The *Adventures of George Edwards*, a Creole. [A novel.]—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

July 20, N.S. [1754].

MY DEAR CHILD.—I have now read over the books you were so good to send, and intend to say something of them all, though some are not worth speaking of. I shall begin, in respect to his dignity, with Lord B. [Bolingbroke], who is a glaring proof how far vanity can blind a man, and how easy it is to varnish over to one's self the most criminal conduct. He declares he always loved his country, though he confesses he endeavoured to betray her to popery and slavery; and loved his friends, though he abandoned them in distress, with all the blackest circumstances of treachery. His account of the Peace of Utrecht is almost equally unfair or partial: I shall allow that, perhaps, the views of the Whigs, at that time, were too vast, and the nation, dazzled by military glory, had hopes too sanguine; but sure the same terms that the French consented to, at the treaty of Gertruydenberg, might have been obtained; or if the displacing of the Duke of Marlborough raised the spirits of our enemies to a degree of refusing what they had before offered, how can he excuse the guilt of removing him from the head of a victorious army, and exposing us to submit to any articles of peace, being unable to continue the war? I agree with him, that the idea of conquering France is a wild, extravagant notion, and would, if possible, be impolitic; but she might have been reduced to such a state as would have rendered her incapable of being terrible to her neighbours for some ages: nor should we have been obliged, as we have done almost ever since, to bribe the French ministers to let us live in quiet. So much for his political reasonings, which, I confess, are delivered in a florid, easy style; but I cannot be of Lord Orrery's opinion, that he is one of the best English writers. Well-turned periods or smooth lines are not the perfection either of prose or verse; they may serve to adorn, but can never stand in the place of good sense. Copiousness of words, however ranged, is always false eloquence, though it will ever impose on some sort of understandings. How many readers and admirers has Ma-

dame de Sévigné, who only gives us, in a lively manner and fashionable phrases, mean sentiments, vulgar prejudices, and endless repetitions? Sometimes the tittle-tattle of a fine lady, sometimes that of an old nurse, always tittle-tattle; yet so well gilt over by airy expressions, and a flowing style, she will always please the same people to whom Lord Bolingbroke will shine as a first-rate author. She is so far to be excused, as her letters were not intended for the press; while he labours to display to posterity all the wit and learning he is master of, and sometimes spoils a good argument by a profusion of words, running out into several pages a thought that might have been more clearly expressed in a few lines, and, what is worse, often falls into contradiction and repetitions, which are almost unavoidable to all voluminous writers, and can only be forgiven to those retailers whose necessity compels them to diurnal scribbling, who load their meaning with epithets, and run into digressions, because (in the jockey phrase) it rids the ground, that is, covers a certain quantity of paper, to answer the demand of the day. A great part of Lord B.'s letters are designed to show his reading, which, indeed, appears to have been very extensive; but I cannot perceive that such a minute account of it can be of any use to the pupil he pretends to instruct; nor can I help thinking he is far below either Tillotson or Addison, even in style, though the latter was sometimes more diffuse than his judgment approved, to furnish out the length of a daily Spectator. I own I have small regard for Lord B. as an author, and the highest contempt for him as a man. He came into the world greatly favoured both by nature and fortune, blest with a noble birth, heir to a large estate, endowed with a strong constitution, and, as I have heard, a beautiful figure, high spirits, a good memory, and a lively apprehension, which was cultivated by a learned education: all these glorious advantages being left to the direction of a judgment stifled by unbounded vanity, he dishonoured his birth, lost his estate, ruined his reputation, and destroyed his health, by a wild pursuit of eminence even in vice and trifles.

I am far from making misfortune a matter of reproach. I know there are accidental occurrences not to be foreseen or avoided by human prudence, by which a character may be injured, wealth dissipated, or a constitution impaired: but I think I may reasonably despise the understanding of one who conducts himself in such a manner as naturally produces such lamentable consequences, and continues in the same destructive paths to the end of a long life, ostentatiously boasting of morals and philosophy in print, and with equal ostentation bragging of the scenes of low debauchery in public conversation, though deplorably weak both in mind and body, and his virtue and his vigour in a state of non-existence. His confederacy with Swift and Pope puts me in mind of that of Bessus and his sword-men, in the "King and no King," who endeavour to support themselves by giving certificates of each other's merit. Pope has triumphantly declared that they may do and say whatever silly things they please, they will still be the greatest geniuses nature ever exhibited. I am delighted with the comparison given of their benevolence, which is indeed most aptly figured by a circle in the water, which widens till it comes to nothing at all; but I am provoked at Lord B.'s misrepresentation of my favourite Atticus, who seems to have been the only Roman that, from good sense, had a true notion of the times in which he lived, in which the republic was inevitably perishing, and the two factions, who pretended to support it, equally endeavouring to gratify their ambition in its ruin. A wise man, in that case, would certainly declare for neither, and try to save himself and family from the general wreck, which could not be done but by a superiority of understanding acknowledged on both sides. I see no glory in losing life or fortune by being the dupe of either, and very much applaud that conduct which could preserve an universal esteem amidst the fury of opposite parties. We are obliged to act vigorously, where action can do any good; but in a storm, when it is impossible to work with success, the best hands and ablest pilots may laudably gain the shore if they can. Atticus could be a friend to men without

engaging in their passions, disapprove their maxims without awaking their resentment, and be satisfied with his own virtue without seeking popular fame: he had the reward of his wisdom in his tranquillity, and will ever stand among the few examples of true philosophy, either ancient or modern.

You must forgive this tedious dissertation. I hope you read in the same spirit I write, and take as proofs of affection whatever is sent you by

Your truly tender mother.

I must add a few words on the *Essay on Exile*, which I read with attention, as a subject that touched me. I found the most abject dejection under a pretended fortitude. That the author felt it, can be no doubt to one that knows (as I do) the mean submissions and solemn promises he made to obtain a return, flattering himself (I suppose) he need only appear to be at the head of the administration, as every ensign of sixteen fancies he is in a fair way to be a general on the first sight of his commission.

You will think I have been too long on the character of Atticus. I own I took pleasure in explaining it. Pope thought himself covertly very severe on Mr. [Addison] by giving him that name; and I feel indignation [when] he is abused, both from his own merit, and ha[ving been] your father's friend; besides that it is naturally sh[ocking to see] any [one] lampooned after his death by the same [man who] had [paid] him the most servile court while he l[ived, and was] highly obliged by him.¹

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

July 22, N.S. [1754].

WHEN I wrote to you last, my dear child, I told you I had a great cold, which ended in a very bad fever,² which continued a fortnight without intermission, and you may imagine has brought me very low. I have not yet left my chamber. My first care is to thank you for yours of May 8.

¹ The portions suggested in brackets are now torn away in the manuscript.—T.

² The reader will find that Lady Mary's illness is referred to not in the last letter, but in the last but one.—T.

I have not yet lost all my interest in this country by the death of the Doge, having another very considerable friend, though I cannot expect to keep him long, he being near fourscore. I mean the Cardinal Querini,¹ who is archbishop of this diocese, and consequently of great power, there being not one family, high or low, in this province, that has not some ecclesiastic in it, and therefore all of them have some dependence on him. He is of one of the first families of Venice, vastly rich of himself, and has many great benefices beside his archbishopric; but these advantages are little in his eyes, in comparison of being the first author (as he fancies) at this day in Christendom; and indeed, if the merit of the books consisted in bulk and number, he might very justly claim that character. I believe he has published, yearly, several volumes for above fifty years, beside corresponding with all the literati of Europe, and, among these, several of the senior fellows at Oxford, and some members of the Royal Society, that neither you nor I ever heard of, who he is persuaded are the most eminent men in England. He is at present employed in writing his own life, of which he has already printed the first tome; and if he goes on in the same style, it will be a most voluminous performance. He begins from the moment of his birth, and tells us that, in that day, he made such extraordinary faces, the midwife, chambermaids, and nurses all agreed, that there was born a shining light in church and state. You'll think me very merry with the failings of my friend. I confess I ought to forgive a vanity to which I am obliged for many good offices, since I do not doubt it is owing to that, that he professes himself so highly attached to my service, having an opinion that my suffrage is of great weight in the learned world, and that I shall not fail to spread his fame, at least, all over Great Britain. He sent me a present last week of a very uncommon kind, even his own picture, extremely well done, but so flattering, it is a young old man, with a most pompous

¹ Cardinal Angelo Maria Querini. He published the works of St. Ephrem Syrus, in six volumes, folio, 1732; and the Life of Pope Paul II., quarto, 1740. See *De Bure, Bibliographie Instructive*, &c.—D.

inscription under it. I suppose he intended it for the ornament of my library, not knowing it is only a closet : however, these distinctions he shows me, give me a figure in this town, where everybody has something to hope from him ; and it was certainly in a view to that they would have complimented me with a statue, for I would not have you mistake so far as to imagine there is any set of people more grateful or generous than another. Mankind is everywhere the same : like cherries or apples, they may differ in size, shape, or colour, from different soils, climates, or culture, but are still essentially the same species ; and the little black wood cherry is not nearer akin to the [may-]dukes that are served at great tables, than the wild naked negro to the fine figures adorned with coronets and ribands. This observation might be carried yet further : all animals are stimulated by the same passions, and act very near alike, as far as we are capable of observing them.

The conclusion of your letter has touched me very much. I sympathise with you, my dear child, in all the concern you express for your family : you may remember, I represented it to you before you was married ; but that is one of the sentiments it is impossible to comprehend till it is felt. A mother only knows a mother's fondness. Indeed, the pain so overbalances the pleasure, that I believe, if it could be thoroughly understood, there would be no mothers at all. However, take care that your anxiety for the future does not take from you the comforts you may enjoy in the present hour : it is all that is properly ours ; and yet such is the weakness of humanity, we commonly lose what is, either by regretting the past, or disturbing our minds with fear of what may be. You have many blessings : a husband you love, and who behaves well to you ; agreeable, hopeful children ; a handsome, convenient house, with pleasant gardens, in a good air and fine situation ; which I place among the most solid satisfactions of life. The truest wisdom is that which diminishes to us what is displeasing, and turns our thoughts to the advantages we possess. I can assure you I give no precepts I do not daily practise. How often do I fancy to myself the pleasure I should take in

seeing you in the midst of your little people; and how severe do I then think my destiny, that denies me that happiness! I endeavour to comfort myself by reflecting, that we should certainly have perpetual disputes (if not quarrels) concerning the management of them; the affection of a grandmother has generally a tincture of dotage: you would say I spoil them, and perhaps not be much in the wrong. Speaking of them calls to my remembrance the token I have so long promised my goddaughter: I am really ashamed of it: I would have sent it by Mr. Anderson, if he had been going immediately to London; but as he proposed a long tour, I durst not press it upon him. It is not easy to find any one who will take the charge of a jewel for a long journey; it may be, the value of it in money, to choose something for herself, would be as acceptable: if so, I will send you a note upon Child. Ceremony should be banished between us. I beg you would speak freely upon that, and all other occasions, to

Your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Lovere, Dec. 8, N.S. [1754].¹

MY DEAR CHILD,—This town is at present in a general stare, or, to use their own expression, *sotto sopra*; and not only this town, but the capital Bergamo, the whole province, the neighbouring Brescian, and perhaps all the Venetian dominion, occasioned by an adventure exactly resembling, and I believe copied from, Pamela. I know not under what constellation that foolish stuff was wrote, but it has been translated into more languages than any modern performance I ever heard of. No proof of its influence was ever stronger than this present story, which, in Richardson's hands, would serve very well to furnish out seven or eight volumes. I shall make it as short as I can.

¹ The original is indorsed in an old handwriting, "Lovere, 1751;" but this year was probably inferred from Lady Mary's allusion at the end of the letter to Lavinia Fenton's marriage to the Duke of Bolton. Lady Mary, however, as appears by the next letter, was not informed of the death of the first duchess till after the death of the duke in 1754.—T.

Here is a gentleman's family, consisting of an old bachelor and his sister, who have fortune enough to live with great elegance, though without any magnificence, possessed of the esteem of all their acquaintance, he being distinguished by his probity, and she by her virtue. They are not only suffered but sought by all the best company, and indeed are the most conversable, reasonable people in the place. She is an excellent housewife, and particularly remarkable for keeping her pretty house as neat as any in Holland. She appears no longer in public, being past fifty, and passes her time chiefly at home with her work, receiving few visitants. This Signora Diana, about ten years since, saw, at a monastery, a girl of eight years old, who came thither to beg alms for her mother. Her beauty, though covered with rags, was very observable, and gave great compassion to the charitable lady, who thought it meritorious to rescue such a modest sweetness as appeared in her face from the ruin to which her wretched circumstances exposed her. She asked her some questions, to which she answered with a natural civility that seemed surprising; and finding the head of her family (her brother) to be a cobbler, who could hardly live by that trade, and her mother too old to work for her maintenance, she bid the child follow her home; and sending for her parent, proposed to her to breed the little Octavia for her servant. This was joyfully accepted, the old woman dismissed with a piece of money, and the girl remained with the Signora Diana, who bought her decent clothes, and took pleasure in teaching her whatever she was capable of learning. She learned to read, write, and cast accounts, with uncommon facility; and had such a genius for work, that she excelled her mistress in embroidery, point, and every operation of the needle. She grew perfectly skilled in confectionary, had a good insight into cookery, and was a great proficient in distillery. To these accomplishments she was so handy, well bred, humble and modest, that not only her master and mistress, but everybody that frequented the house, took notice of her. She lived thus near nine years, never going out but to church. However, beauty is as difficult to conceal as light;

hers began to make a great noise. Signora Diana told me she observed an unusual concourse of peddling women that came on pretext to sell penn'orths¹ of lace, china, &c., and several young gentlemen, very well powdered, that were perpetually walking before her door, and looking up at the windows. These prognostics alarmed her prudence, and she listened very willingly to some honourable proposals that were made by many honest, thriving tradesmen. She communicated them to Octavia, and told her, that though she was sorry to lose so good a servant, yet she thought it right to advise her to choose a husband. The girl answered modestly, that it was her duty to obey all her commands, but she found no inclination to marriage; and if she would permit her to live single, she should think it a greater obligation than any other she could bestow. Signora Diana was too conscientious to force her into a state from which she could not free her, and left her to her own disposal. However, they parted soon after: whether (as the neighbours say) Signor Aurelio Ardinghi, her brother, looked with too much attention on the young woman, or that she herself (as Diana says) desired to seek a place of more profit, she removed to Bergamo, where she soon found preferment, being strongly recommended by the Ardinghi family. She was advanced to be first waiting-woman to an old countess, who was so well pleased with her service, she desired, on her death-bed, Count Jeronimo Sosi, her son, to be kind to her. He found no repugnance to this act of obedience, having distinguished the beautiful Octavia from his first sight of her; and, during the six months that she had served in the house, had tried every art of a fine gentleman, accustomed to victories of that sort, to vanquish the virtue of this fair virgin. He has a handsome figure, and has had an education uncommon in this country, having made the tour of Europe, and brought from Paris all the improvements that are to be picked up there, being celebrated for his grace in dancing, and skill in fencing and riding, by which he is a

¹ The word "penn'orths" was employed to mean simply "bargains."—T.

favourite among the ladies, and respected by the men. Thus qualified for conquest, you may judge of his surprise at the firm yet modest resistance of this country girl, who was neither to be moved by address, nor gained by liberality, nor on any terms would be prevailed on to stay as his housekeeper, after the death of his mother. She took that post in the house of an old judge, where she continued to be solicited by the emissaries of the count's passion, and found a new persecutor in her master, who, after three months' endeavour to corrupt her, offered her marriage. She chose to return to her former obscurity, and escaped from his pursuit, without asking any wages, and privately returned to the Signora Diana. She threw herself at her feet, and, kissing her hands, begged her, with tears, to conceal her at least some time, if she would not accept of her service. She protested she had never been happy since she left it. While she was making these submissions, Signor Aurelio entered. She entreated his intercession on her knees, who was easily persuaded to consent she should stay with them, though his sister blamed her highly for her precipitate flight, having no reason, from the age and character of her master, to fear any violence, and wondered at her declining the honour he offered her. Octavia confessed that perhaps she had been too rash in her proceedings, but said, that he seemed to resent her refusal in such a manner as frightened her; she hoped that after a few days' search he would think no more of her; and that she scrupled entering into the holy bands of matrimony, where her heart did not sincerely accompany all the words of the ceremony. Signora Diana had nothing to say in contradiction to this pious sentiment; and her brother applauded the honesty which could not be perverted by any interest whatever. She remained concealed in their house, where she helped in the kitchen, cleaned the rooms, and redoubled her usual diligence and officiousness. Her old master came to Lovere on pretence of adjusting a law-suit, three days after, and made private inquiry after her; but hearing from her mother and brother (who knew nothing of

her being here) that they had never heard of her, he concluded she had taken another route, and returned to Bergamo; and she continued in this retirement near a fortnight.

Last Sunday, as soon as the day was closed, arrived at Signor Aurelio's door a handsome equipage in a large bark, attended by four well-armed servants on horseback. An old priest stepped out of it, and desiring to speak with Signora Diana, informed her he came from the Count Jeronimo Sosi to demand Octavia; that the count waited for her at a village four miles from hence, where he intended to marry her; and had sent him, who was engaged to perform the divine rite, that Signora Diana might resign her to his care without any difficulty. The young damsel was called for, who entreated she might be permitted the company of another priest with whom she was acquainted: this was readily granted; and she sent for a young man that visits me very often, being remarkable for his sobriety and learning. Meanwhile, a valet-de-chambre presented her with a box, in which was a complete genteel undress for a lady. Her laced linen and fine nightgown were soon put on, and away they marched, leaving the family in a surprise not to be described.

Signor Aurelio came to drink coffee with me next morning: his first words were, he had brought me the history of Pamela. I said, laughing, I had been tired with it long since. He explained himself by relating this story, mixed with great resentment for Octavia's conduct. Count Jeronimo's father had been his ancient friend and patron; and this escape from his house (he said) would lay him under a suspicion of having abetted the young man's folly, and perhaps expose him to the anger of all his relations, for contriving an action he would rather have died than suffered, if he had known how to prevent it. I easily believed him, there appearing a latent jealousy under his affliction, that showed me he envied the bridegroom's happiness, at the same time he condemned his extravagance.

Yesterday noon, being Saturday, Don Joseph returned, who has got the name of Parson Williams by this expedition: he

relates, that when the bark which carried the coach and train arrived, they found the amorous count waiting for his bride on the bank of the lake: he would have proceeded immediately to the church; but she utterly refused it, till they had each of them been at confession; after which the happy knot was tied by the parish priest. They continued their journey, and came to their palace at Bergamo in a few hours, where everything was prepared for their reception. They received the communion next morning, and the count declares that the lovely Octavia has brought him an inestimable portion, since he owes to her the salvation of his soul. He has renounced play, at which he had lost a great deal of time and money. She has already retrenched several superfluous servants, and put his family into an exact method of economy, preserving all the splendour necessary to his rank. He has sent a letter in his own hand to her mother, inviting her to reside with them, and subscribing himself her dutiful son: but the countess has sent another privately by Don Joseph, in which she advises the old woman to stay at Lovere, promising to take care she shall want nothing, accompanied with a token of twenty sequins,¹ which is at least nineteen more than ever she saw in her life.

I forgot to tell you that from Octavia's first serving the old lady, there came frequent charities in her name to her poor parent, which nobody was surprised at, the lady being celebrated for pious works, and Octavia known to be a great favourite with her. It is now discovered that they were all sent by the generous lover, who has presented Don Joseph very handsomely, but he has brought neither letter nor message to the house of Ardinghi, which affords much speculation.

I am afraid you are heartily tired with this tedious tale. I will not lengthen it with reflections. I fancy yours will be [the] same with mine. All these adventures proceed from artifice on one side and weakness on the other. An honest, tender mind is betrayed to ruin by the charms that make the fortune of a designing head, which, when joined with a beau-

¹ About ten guineas English.—D.

tiful face, can never fail of advancement, except barred by a wise mother, who locks up her daughters from view till nobody cares to look on them. My poor friend the Duchess of Bolton¹ was educated in solitude, with some choice books, by a saint-like governess: crammed with virtue and good qualities, she thought it impossible not to find gratitude, though she failed to give passion; and upon this plan threw away her estate, was despised by her husband, and laughed at by the public. Polly, bred in an ale-house, and produced on the stage, has obtained wealth and title, and found the way to be esteemed. So useful is early experience—without it half of life is dissipated in correcting the errors that we have been taught to receive as indisputable truths. Make my compliments to Lord Bute. I am out of humour with Lady Mary for neglecting to answer my letters. However, she shares my blessing with her brothers and sisters. I have a little ring for Lady Jane, but God knows when I shall have an opportunity to send it. I am ever

Your truly affectionate mother.

It is a long time since I have heard from your father, though I have wrote several times.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Lovere, Dec. 19, N.S. [1754].

I RECEIVED yours of October 6, yesterday, which gave me great pleasure. I am flattered by finding that our sentiments are the same in regard to Lord Bolingbroke's writings, as you will see more clearly, if you ever have the long letter I have wrote to you on that subject. I believe he never read Horace, or any other author, with a design of instructing himself, thinking he was born to give precepts, and not to follow them: at least, if he was not mad enough to have this opinion, he endeavoured to impose it on the rest of the world. All his works, being well considered, are little more than a panegyric on his own universal genius; many of his pretensions as prepos-

¹ Lady Anne Vaughan, daughter and heir of John Earl of Carberry, married Charles Duke of Bolton in 1713, and died in 1751. The Duke of Bolton afterwards married Lavinia Fenton, the celebrated *Polly* in Gay's *Beggar's Opera*.—W.

terously inconsistent as if Sir Isaac Newton had aimed at being a critic in fashions, and wrote for the information of tailors and mantua-makers. I am of your opinion that he never looked into half the authors he quotes, and am much mistaken if he is not obliged to Mr. Bayle for the generality of his criticisms; for which reason he affects to despise him, that he may steal from him with less suspicion. A diffusive style (though often admired as florid by all half-witted readers) is commonly obscure, and always trifling. Horace has told us, that where words abound, sense is thinly spread; as trees overcharged with leaves bear little fruit.

You do not mention Lord Orrery, or perhaps would not throw away time in perusing that extraordinary work, addressed to a son, whom he educates with an intention he should be a first minister, and promises to pray to God for him if ever he plays the knave in that station. I perceive that he has already been honoured with five editions. I wish that encouragement may prevail with him to give the world more memoirs. I am resolved to read them all, though they should multiply to as many tomes as Erasmus.

Here are no newspapers to be had but those printed under this government; consequently I never learn the births or deaths of private persons. I was ignorant of that of my poor friend the Duchess of Bolton, when my daughter's last letter told me the death of the duke,¹ and the jointure he has left his second duchess.

I am very glad your health is so good. May that and every other blessing be ever yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Jan. 1, N.S., 1755.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I wish you many new years, accompanied with every blessing that can render them agreeable; and that it was in my power to send you a better new year's gift than a dull letter: you must, however, accept it as well meant, though ill performed. I am glad you have found a house to

¹ He died August 26, 1754.—D.

please you. I know nothing of that part of the town you mention. I believe London would appear to me as strange as any place I have passed in my travels, and the streets as much altered as the inhabitants. I did not know Lady H. Wentworth was married,¹ though you speak of her children: you see my total ignorance: it would be amusing to me to hear various things that are as indifferent to you as an old almanac. I am sorry my friend Smollett loses his time in translations; he has certainly a talent for invention, though I think it flags a little in his last work. Don Quixote is a difficult undertaking: I shall never desire to read any attempt to new-dress him. Though I am a mere piddler in the Spanish language, I had rather take pains to understand him in the original, than sleep over a stupid translation.

I thank you for your partiality in my favour. It is not my interest to rectify mistakes that are so obliging to me. To say truth, I think myself an uncommon kind of creature, being an old woman without superstition, peevishness, or censoriousness. I am so far from thinking my youth was past in an age of more virtue and sense than the present, I am of opinion the world improves every day. I confess I remember to have dressed for St. James's chapel with the same thoughts your daughters will have at the opera; but am not of the Rambler's mind, that the church is the proper place to make love in; and the peepers behind a fan, who divided their glances between their lovers and their prayer-book, were not at all modester than those that now laugh aloud in public walks. I tattle on, and forget you're in town, and consequently I ought to shorten my letters, knowing very well that the same letter that would be read thrice over in the country, will be crammed into the pocket before 'tis half gone through, when people are in a hurry to go to the court or play-house. My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to you and yours, to whom I am ever a most affectionate mother.

¹ Lady Henrietta Wentworth, daughter of Thomas Earl of Strafford, was married to Mr. Vernon in December, 1743.—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Lovere, Jan. 23, N.S. [1755].

I AM very sorry for your past indisposition, and, to say truth, not heartily glad of your present condition; but I neither do nor will admit of your excuses for your silence. I have already told you some ten or twelve times over, that you should make your eldest daughter your secretary; it would be an ease to yourself, and highly improving to her, in every regard: you may, if you please, at once oblige your mother and instruct your daughter, by only talking half an hour over your tea in the morning.

The Duchess of Queensberry's misfortune would move compassion in the hardest heart;¹ yet, all circumstances coolly considered, I think the young lady deserves most to be pitied, being left in the terrible situation of a young and (I suppose) rich widowhood, which, as I have already said of M. Cook [Lady Mary Coke], is walking blindfold, upon stilts, amidst precipices, though perhaps as little sensible of her danger as a child of a quarter old would be in the paws of a monkey leaping on the tiles of a house. I believe, like all others of your age, you have long been convinced there is no real happiness to be found or expected in this world. You have seen a court near enough to know neither riches nor power can secure it; and all human endeavours after felicity are as childish as running after sparrows to lay salt on their tails: but I ought to give you another information, which can only be learned by experience, that liberty is an idea equally chimerical, and has no real existence in this life. I can truly assure you I have never been so little mistress of my own time and actions, as since I have lived alone. Mankind is placed in a state of dependency, not only on one another (which all are in some degree), but so many inevitable accidents thwart our designs, and limit our best laid projects. The poor

¹ The calamity here alluded to was the death of the Earl of Drumlanrig, son of Charles third Duke of Queensberry. He married a daughter of the Earl of Hoptoun, July 10, 1754, and was killed by the accidental explosion of a pistol the 20th of October following.—D.

efforts of our utmost prudence and political schemes, appear, I fancy, in the eyes of some superior beings, like the pecking of a young linnet to break a wire cage, or the climbing of a squirrel in a hoop; the moral needs no explanation: let us sing as cheerfully as we can in our impenetrable confinement, and crack our nuts with pleasure from the little store that is allowed us.

My old friend the Cardinal [Querini]¹ is dead of an apoplectic fit, which I am sorry for, notwithstanding the disgust that happened between us, on the ridiculous account of which I gave you the history a year ago.² His memory will, probably, last as long as this province, having embellished it with so many noble structures, particularly a public library well furnished, richly adorned, and a college built for p [torn] scholars, with salaries for masters, and plentifully endowed; many charitable foundations, and so large a part of the new cathedral (which will be one of the finest churches in Lombardy) has been built at his expense, he may be almost called the founder of it. He has left a considerable annuity to continue it, and deserves an eminent place among the few prelates that have devoted what they received from the Church to the use of the public, which is not here (as in some countries) so ungrateful to overlook benefits. Many statues have been erected, and medals cast to his honour, one of which has the figures of Piety, Learning, and Munificence, on the reverse, in the attitude of the three Graces. His funeral has been celebrated by the city with all the splendour it was capable of bestowing, and waited on by all ranks of the inhabitants.

You told me, some months since, that a box was made up for me. I have never had the bill of lading, and know not whether you have received the little bill of exchange sent by

Your most affectionate mother.

¹ Died Jan., 1755.—T.

² See *antè*, p. 241.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Lovere] March 1 [1755].

I PITY Lady M. Coke extremely. You will be surprised at this sentiment, when she is the present envy of her sex, in the possession of youth, health, wealth, wit, beauty and liberty. All these seeming advantages will prove snares to her. She appears to me to be walking blindfold, upon stilts, amidst precipices. She is at a dangerous time of life, when the passions are in full vigour, and, we are apt to flatter ourselves, the understanding arrived at maturity. People are never so near playing the fool, as when they think themselves wise: they lay aside that distrust which is the surest guard against indiscretion, and venture on many steps they would have trembled at, at fifteen; and, like children, are never so much exposed to falling, as when they first leave off leading-strings. I think nothing but a miracle, or the support of a guardian angel, can protect her. It is true (except I am much mistaken), nature has furnished her with one very good defence. I took particular notice of her, both from my own liking her, and her uncommon obliging behaviour to me. She was then of an age not capable of much disguise, and I thought she had a great turn to economy: it is an admirable shield against the most fatal weaknesses. Those who have the good fortune to be born with that inclination seldom ruin themselves, and are early aware of the designs laid against them. Yet, with all that precaution, she will have so many plots contrived for her destruction, she will find it very difficult to escape; and if she is a second time unhappily engaged, it will make her much more miserable than the first; as all misfortunes, brought on by our own imprudence, are the most wounding to a sensible heart. The most certain security would be that diffidence which naturally arises from an impartial self-examination. But this is the hardest of all tasks, requiring great reflection, long retirement, and is strongly repugnant to our own vanity, which very unwillingly reveals, even to ourselves, our common frailty, though it is every way a useful study. Mr. Locke, who has made a more exact dis-

section of the human mind than any man before him, declares he gained all his knowledge from the consideration of himself. It is indeed necessary to judge of others. You condemn Lord Cornbury without knowing what he could say in his justification. I am persuaded he thought he performed an act of rigid justice, in excluding the D. of Q. [Duchess of Queensberry] from an inheritance to which she had no natural, though a legal, right; especially having had a large portion from her real father. I have heard him talk on that subject without naming names, and call it a robbery within the law. He carried that notion to a great height. I agreed with him, that a woman that produced a false child into a family incurred the highest guilt (being irreparable); but I could not be of his opinion, that it was the duty of the child, in such a case, to renounce the fortune the law entitled it to. You see he has acted by a maxim he imagined just. Lady Essex being, inside and out, resembling Lord Clarendon; and whoever remembers Lord Carleton's eyes, must confess they now shine in the duchess's face. I am not bribed by Lord Cornbury's behaviour to me to find excuses for him; but I have always endeavoured to look on the conduct of my acquaintance without any regard to their way of acting towards me. I can say, with truth, I have strictly adhered to this principle whenever I have been injured; but I own, to my shame be it spoken, the love of flattery has sometimes prevailed on me, under the mask of gratitude, to think better of people than they deserved when they have professed more value for me than I was conscious of meriting. I slide insensibly into talking of myself, though I always resolve against it. I will relieve you from so dull a subject, by concluding my letter with my compliments to Lord Bute, my blessing to my grandchildren, and the assurance of my being your ever most affectionate mother.

I have received a letter from Lady Mary, and will answer it the next post.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

April 15, N.S. [1755].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of February 10th with

great pleasure, as it brought me the news of your health, and that of your family, though mixed with some mortification to find that some of yours have been lost, and several of mine. I never had that in which you mention the death of Lord Gower, and should be glad to hear in what state he has left his affairs. I do not doubt, as madame had the carving of the whole, she has taken care to reserve some good bits for herself. I cannot guess who you mean by Lord Montfort,¹ there being no such title when I left England, nor any Lord Hertford,² who I hear is named ambassador to France: these are all new people to me. I wish you would give me some information concerning them. None can be so agreeable as the continuation of your father's health: you see in him the good effect of a strict abstinence and regular exercise. I am much pleased (but not at all surprised) at his kindness to you: I know him to be more capable of a generous action than any man I ever knew. I am afraid my last long letter to him has miscarried, and perhaps he thinks me very negligent, or very stupid in delaying to answer that which he sent me. You may assure him no part of the merit of it was lost upon me. I took all possible care my thanks for it should be safely delivered into the postmaster's own hand. I suspect my cautions have been all in vain, and also that you have not had mine in which was endorsed a small bill on Mr. Child. I have never heard one word of the books that you told me were packed up last

¹ Henry Bromley, created Baron Montford, 1741.—D. Mr. Wortley had, no doubt, sent Lady Mary particulars of the death of Lord Montford, who shot himself on the 1st of January, 1755. Lady Hervey thus alludes to this occurrence in a letter dated London, Jan. 7, 1755: "Lord Montford's strange end surprised me a good deal, as he seemed as happy as a great taste for pleasure and an ample fortune to gratify it could make him. . . . He had supped and played at White's as usual the night before, but sent to a lawyer he made use of, to come to him the next day at eleven o'clock, having himself business at twelve. The lawyer, with Lord Montford, read over his will three times, examining very carefully every word, that there might not be any flaw or room left for a dispute. He then sealed up the will and the duplicate, putting the one into his drawer, and desiring the lawyer to take care of the other; went immediately into his bed-chamber, and before the man could take his papers, and get down stairs, Lord Montford shot himself through the head." Horace Walpole also gives in his letters an account of the same event.—T.

² Francis Seymour Conway, created Earl of Hertford, 1750.—D. It was determined to send him as an ambassador to France near the close of 1754; but the intention was abandoned, owing to the quarrel with that country.—T.

June. These things are very provoking, [but] fretting mends nothing. I will continue to write on, though the uncertainty of your receiving my letters is a strong abatement of my pleasure in writing, and will be of heavy consequence to my style. I feel at this minute the spirit of dulness chill my heart, and I am ready to break out into alacks and alases, with many murmurs against my cruel destiny, that will not even permit this distant conversation between us, without such allaying circumstances. However, I beg you not to be discouraged. I am persuaded, from the goodness of your heart, that you are willing to give me happiness; and I can have none here so great as a letter from you. You can never want subjects; and I can assure you that your eldest daughter cannot be more delighted with a birthday suit, or your youngest with a paper of sugar-plums, than I am at the sight of your hand. You seem very anxious on the account of your children's education. I have said all I have to say on that head; and am still of the same opinion, that learning is necessary to the happiness of women, and ignorance the common foundation of their errors, both in morals and conduct. I was well acquainted with a lady (the D. [Duchess] of M. [Manchester]), who, I am persuaded, owed all her misfortunes to the want of instruction in her youth. You know another, who, if she had had her natural good understanding cultivated by letters, would never have mistaken Johnny Gay for a wit, and much less have printed, that he took the liberty of calling her his Laura.¹

I am pleasingly interrupted by the welcome information from Lord Bute that you are safely delivered of a son.² I am never in pain for any of that sex. If they have any merit, there are so many roads for them to meet good fortune, they can no way fail of it but by not deserving it. We have but one of establishing ours, and that surrounded with precipices, and perhaps after all better missed than found. I have already told you I look upon my granddaughters as lay nuns.

¹ The Duchess of Queensberry.—D.

William, afterwards Lord Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of all Ireland, born March 15, 1755.—T.

Lady Mary might avoid that destiny, if religion was not a bar to her being disposed of in this country. You will laugh to hear it, but it is really true, I had proposed to me a young man of quality, with a good estate : his parents are both dead : she would find a fine palace, and neither want jewels nor equipage ; and her name (with a present from me) be thought sufficient fortune.

I shall write to Lord Bute this post. My blessing to you and yours is sincerely sent from your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

July 24 [1755].

IT is always a great pleasure to me, my dear child, to hear of your health, and that of your family. This year has been fatal to the literati of Italy. The Marquis Maffei soon followed Cardinal Querini. He was in England when you were married.¹ Perhaps you may remember his coming to see your father's Greek inscription:² he was then an old man, and consequently now a great age ; but preserved his memory and senses in their first vigour. After having made the tour of Europe in the search of antiquities, he fixed his residence in his native town of Verona, where he erected himself a little empire, from the general esteem, and a conversation (so they call an assembly) which he established in his palace, which is one of the largest in that place, and so luckily situated, that it is between the theatre and the ancient amphitheatre. He made piazzas leading to each of them, filled with shops, where were sold coffee, tea, chocolate, all sort of cool [drinks ?] and sweetmeats, and in the midst, a court well kept, and sanded, for the use of those young gentlemen who would exercise their managed horses, or show their mistresses their skill in riding. His gallery was open every evening at five o'clock, where he had a fine collection of antiquities, and two large cabinets of medals, intaglios, and cameos, ranged in exact order. His library joined to it ; and on the other side a suite of five rooms, the first of which was destined to dancing, the

¹ The marriage took place in August, 1736.—T.

² Presented by Mr. Wortley to Trinity College, Cambridge.—D.

second to cards (but all games of hazard excluded), and the others (where he himself presided in an easy-chair) sacred to conversation, which always turned upon some point of learning, either historical or poetical. Controversy and politics being utterly prohibited, he generally proposed the subject, and took great delight in instructing the young people, who were obliged to seek the medal, or explain the inscription, that illustrated any fact they discoursed of. Those who chose the diversion of the public walks, or theatre, went thither, but never failed returning to give an account of the drama, which produced a critical dissertation on that subject, the Marquis having given shining proofs of his skill in that art. His tragedy of *Merope*, which is much injured by Voltaire's translation, being esteemed a masterpiece; and his comedy of the *Ceremonies*, being so just a ridicule of those formal fopperies, it has gone a great way in helping to banish them out of Italy. The walkers contributed to the entertainment by an account of some herb or flower, which led the way to a botanical conversation; or, if they were such inaccurate observers as to have nothing of that kind to offer, they repeated some pastoral description. One day in the week was set apart for music, vocal and instrumental, but no mercenaries admitted to the concert. Thus, at very little expense (his fortune not permitting a large one), he had the happiness of giving his countrymen a taste of polite pleasure, and showing the youth how to pass their time agreeably without debauchery; and (if I durst say it) in so doing, has been a greater benefactor to his country than the cardinal, with all his magnificent foundations, and voluminous writings to support superstition, and create disputes on things, for the most part, in their own nature indifferent. The Veronese nobility, having no road open to advancement, are not tormented with ambition, or its child, faction; and having learned to make the best of the health and fortune allotted them, terminate all their views in elegant pleasure. They say, God has reserved glory to himself, and permitted pleasure to the pursuit of man. In the autumn, which is here the pleasantest season of the year, a

band of about thirty join their hunting equipages, and, carrying with them a portable theatre and a set of music, make a progress in the neighbouring provinces, where they hunt every morning, perform an opera every Sunday, and other plays the rest of the week, to the entertainment of all the neighbourhood. I have had many honourable invitations from my old friend Maffei¹ to make one of this society; [but] some accident or other has always prevented me. You that are accustomed to hear of deep political schemes and wise harangues, will despise, perhaps, this trifling life. I look upon them in another light; as a sect of rational philosophers,—

Who sing and dance, and laugh away their time,
Fresh as their groves, and happy as their clime.

My paper is out.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Lovere, July [August?] 23 [1755].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have promised you some remarks on all the books I have received. I believe you would easily forgive my not keeping my word; however, I shall go on. The Rambler is certainly a strong misnomer; he always plods in the beaten road of his predecessors, following the Spectator (with the same pace a pack-horse would do a hunter) in the style that is proper to lengthen a paper. These writers may, perhaps, be of service to the public, which is saying a great deal in their favour. There are numbers of both sexes who never read anything but such productions, and cannot spare time, from doing nothing, to go through a sixpenny pamphlet. Such gentle readers may be improved by a moral hint, which, though repeated over and over from generation to generation, they never heard in their lives. I should be glad to know the name of this laborious author. H. Fielding has given a true picture of himself and his first wife, in the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Booth, some compliments to his own figure excepted; and, I am persuaded, several of the incidents he mentions are

¹ The Marquis Scipione Maffei, the author of the *Verona Illustrata*, 1733, folio, and the *Museum Veronense*, 1749, folio, was very highly esteemed in the literary world as an antiquary and virtuoso.—D.

real matters of fact. I wonder he does not perceive Tom Jones and Mr. Booth are sorry scoundrels. All these sort of books have the same fault, which I cannot easily pardon, being very mischievous. They place a merit in extravagant passions, and encourage young people to hope for impossible events, to draw them out of the misery they chose to plunge themselves into, expecting legacies from unknown relations, and generous benefactors to distressed virtue, as much out of nature as fairy treasures. Fielding has really a fund of true humour, and was to be pitied at his first entrance into the world, having no choice, as he said himself, but to be a hackney writer, or a hackney coachman. His genius deserved a better fate; but I cannot help blaming that continued indiscretion, to give it the softest name, that has run through his life, and I am afraid still remains. I guessed R. Random to be his, though without his name. I cannot think Fadom [Ferdinand Fathom] wrote by the same hand, it is every way so much below it. Sally [Fielding] has mended her style in her last volume of David Simple,¹ which conveys a useful moral, though she does not seem to have intended it: I mean, shows the ill consequences of not providing against casual losses, which happen to almost everybody. Mrs. Orgueil's character is well drawn, and is frequently to be met with. The Art of Tormenting, the Female Quixote, and Sir C. Goodville are all sale work. I suppose they proceed from her pen, and heartily pity her, constrained by her circumstances to seek her bread by a method, I do not doubt, she despises. Tell me who is that accomplished countess she celebrates. I left no such person in London; nor can I imagine who is meant by the English Sappho mentioned in Betsy Thoughtless, whose adventures, and those of Jenny Jessamy, gave me some amusement. I was better entertained by the Valet, who very fairly represents how you are bought and sold by your servants. I am now so accustomed to another manner of treatment, it would be difficult for me to suffer them: his adventures have the uncommon merit of ending in a surprising manner. The general want

¹ The "last volume" of David Simple was published in February, 1753.—T.

of invention which reigns among our writers, inclines me to think it is not the natural growth of our island, which has not sun enough to warm the imagination. The press is loaded by the servile flock of imitators. Lord B. [Bolingbroke] would have quoted Horace in this place. Since I was born, no original has appeared excepting Congreve, and Fielding, who would, I believe, have approached nearer to his excellences, if not forced by necessity to publish without correction, and throw many productions into the world he would have thrown into the fire if meat could have been got without money, or money without scribbling. The greatest virtue, justice, and the most distinguishing prerogative of mankind, writing, when duly executed, do honour to human nature; but when degenerated into trades, are the most contemptible ways of getting bread. I am sorry not to see any more of Peregrine Pickle's performances: I wish you would tell me his name.

I can't forbear saying something in relation to my granddaughters, who are very near my heart. If any of them are fond of reading, I would not advise you to hinder them (chiefly because it is impossible) seeing poetry, plays, or romances; but accustom them to talk over what they read, and point [out] to them, as you are very capable of doing, the absurdity often concealed under fine expressions, where the sound is apt to engage the admiration of young people. I was so much charmed, at fourteen, with the dialogue of Henry and Emma, I can say it by heart to this day, without reflecting on the monstrous folly of the story in plain prose, where a young heiress to a fond father is represented falling in love with a fellow she had only seen as a huntsman, a falconer, and a beggar, and who confesses, without any circumstances of excuse, that he is obliged to run his country, having newly committed a murder. She ought reasonably to have supposed him, at best, a highwayman; yet the virtuous virgin resolves to run away with him, to live among the banditti, and wait upon his trollop, if she had no other way of enjoying his company. This senseless tale is, however, so well varnished with melody of words and pomp of sentiments, I am convinced it

has hurt more girls than ever were injured by the lewdest poems extant.

I fear this counsel has been repeated to you before ; but I have lost so many letters designed for you, I know not which you have received. If you would have me avoid this fault, you must take notice of those that arrive, which you very seldom do. My dear child, God bless you and yours. I am ever your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Lovere, Sept. 22 [1755].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received, two days ago, the box of books you were so kind to send ; but I can scarce say whether my pleasure or disappointment was greatest. I was much pleased to see before me a fund of amusement, but heartily vexed to find your letter consisting only of three lines and a half. Why will you not employ Lady Mary as secretary, if it is troublesome to you to write ? I have told you over and over, you may at the same time oblige your mother and improve your daughter, both which I should think very agreeable to yourself. You can never want something to say. The history of your nursery, if you had no other subject to write on, would be very acceptable to me. I am such a stranger to everything in England, I should be glad to hear more particulars relating to the families I am acquainted with :—if Miss Liddel¹ marries the Lord Euston I knew, or his nephew, who has succeeded him ; if Lord Berkeley² has left children ; and several trifles of that sort, that would be a satisfaction to my curiosity. I am sorry for H. Fielding's death, not only as I shall read no more of his writings, but I believe he lost more than others, as no man enjoyed life more than he did, though few had less reason to do so, the highest of his preferment being raking in the lowest sinks of vice and misery. I should think it a nobler and less nauseous employment to be one of

¹ She married Augustus Henry Earl of Euston, Jan. 29, 1756, who succeeded his grandfather as Duke of Grafton in May, 1757.—D.

² Augustus Earl of Berkeley died Jan. 9, 1755, and left two sons and two daughters.—D.

the staff-officers that conduct the nocturnal weddings. His happy constitution (even when he had, with great pains, half demolished it) made him forget everything when he was before a venison pasty, or over a flask of champagne; and I am persuaded he has known more happy moments than any prince upon earth. His natural spirits gave him rapture with his cook-maid, and cheerfulness when he was fluxing in a garret. There was a great similitude between his character and that of Sir Richard Steele. He had the advantage both in learning and, in my opinion, genius: they both agreed in wanting money in spite of all their friends, and would have wanted it, if their hereditary lands had been as extensive as their imagination; yet each of them [was] so formed for happiness, it is pity he was not immortal. I have read the *Cry*; and if I would write in the style to be admired by good Lord Orrery, I would tell you "*The Cry*" made me ready to cry, and the "*Art of Tormenting*" tormented me very much. I take them to be Sally Fielding's, and also the *Female Quixote*: the plan of that is pretty, but ill executed: on the contrary, the fable of the *Cry* is the most absurd I ever saw, but the sentiments generally just; and I think, if well dressed, would make a better body of ethics than Bolingbroke's. Her inventing new words, that are neither more harmonious or significant than those already in use, is intolerable. The most edifying part of the *Journey to Lisbon*, is the history of the kitten: I was the more touched by it, having a few days before found one, in deplorable circumstances, in a neighbouring vineyard. I did not only relieve her present wants with some excellent milk, but had her put into a clean basket, and brought to my own house, where she has lived ever since very comfortably.

I desire to have Fielding's posthumous works, with his *Memoirs of Jonathan Wild*, and *Journey to the Next World*: also the *Memoirs of Verocand*, a man of pleasure, and those of a *Young Lady*. You will call all this trash, trumpery, &c. I can assure you I was more entertained by G. Edwards than H. St. John, of whom you have sent me duplicates. I see new story books with the same pleasure your eldest daughter does a

new dress, or the youngest a new baby. I thank God I can find playthings for my age. I am not of Cowley's mind, that this world is

"A dull, ill acted comedy;"

Nor of Mrs. Philips's, that it is

"A too well acted tragedy."

I look upon it as a very pretty farce, for those that can see it in that light. I confess a severe critic, that would examine by ancient rules, might find many defects; but 'tis ridiculous to judge seriously of a puppet-show. Those that can laugh, and be diverted with absurdities, are the wisest spectators, be it of writings, actions, or people.

The Stage Coach has some grotesque figures that amuse: I place it in the rank of Charlotte Summers, and perhaps it is by the same author. I am pleased with Sir Herald for recording a generous action of the D. of Montagu, which I know to be true, with some variation of circumstances. You should have given me a key to the Invisible Spy, particularly to the catalogue of books in it. I know not whether the conjugal happiness of the D. of B. [Duke of Bedford] is intended as a compliment or an irony.¹

This letter is as long and as dull as any of Richardson's. I am ashamed of it, notwithstanding my maternal privilege of being tiresome.

I return many thanks to Lord Bute for the china, which I am sure I shall be very fond of, though I have not yet seen it. I send you a third bill of exchange, supposing the second, sent last June, has not reached you. In the next box, put up the History of London, and also three of Pinchbec's watches, shagrine cases, and enamelled dial-plates. When I left England, they were five guineas each; I do not now know the price. Whatever it is, pray take it of Mr. Samuel Child. You may imagine they are for presents; one for my doctor, who is exactly Parson Adams in another profession, and the others for two priests, to whom I have some obligations.

¹ The question was of some interest to Lady Mary, the duchess being her niece.—T.

This Richardson is a strange fellow. I heartily despise him, and eagerly read him, nay, sob over his works in a most scandalous manner. The two first tomes of *Clarissa* touched me, as being very resembling to my maiden days; and I find in the pictures of Sir Thomas Grandison and his lady, what I have heard of my mother, and seen of my father.

This letter is grown (I know not how) into an immeasurable length. I answer it to my conscience as a just judgment on you for the shortness of yours. Remember my unalterable maxim, where we love we have always something to say; consequently my pen never tires when expressing to you the thoughts of

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all your dear young ones, even the last comer.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Oct. 20, N.S. [1755].

DEAR CHILD,—I have now read over Richardson—he sinks horribly in his third volume¹ (he does so in his story of *Clarissa*). When he talks of Italy, it is plain he is no better acquainted with it than he is with the kingdom of Mancomugi. He might have made his Sir Charles's amour with Clementina begin in a convent, where the pensioners sometimes take great liberties; but that such familiarity should be permitted in her father's house, is as repugnant to custom, as it would be in London for a young lady of quality to dance on the ropes at Bartholomew fair: neither does his hero behave to her in a manner suitable to his nice notions. It was impossible a discerning man should not see her passion early enough to check it, if he had really designed it. His conduct puts me in mind of some ladies I have known, who could never find out a man to be in love with them, let him do or say what he would, till he made a direct attempt, and then they were so surprised, I warrant you! Nor do I approve Sir Charles's offered compromise (as he calls it). There must be a great indifference

¹ Alluding to the novel of Sir Charles Grandison.—T.

as to religion on both sides, to make so strict a union as marriage tolerable between people of such distinct persuasions. He seems to think women have no souls, by agreeing so easily that his daughters should be educated in bigotry and idolatry. —You will perhaps think this last a hard word; yet it is not difficult to prove, that either the papists are guilty of idolatry, or the pagans never were so. You may see in Lucian (in his vindication of his images), that they did not take their statues to be real gods, but only the representations of them. The same doctrine may be found in Plutarch; and it is all the modern priests have to say in excuse for their worshipping wood and stone, though they cannot deny, at the same time, that the vulgar are apt to confound that distinction.

I always, if possible, avoid controversial disputes: whenever I cannot do it, they are very short. I ask my adversary if he believes the Scripture? when that is answered affirmatively, their church may be proved, by a child of ten years old, contradictory to it, in their most important points. My second question is, if they think St. Peter and St. Paul knew the true Christian religion? The constant reply is, O yes. Then say I, purgatory, transubstantiation, invocation of saints, adoration of the Virgin, relics (of which they might have had a cart-load), and observation of Lent, is no part of it, since they neither taught nor practised any of these things. Vows of celibacy are not more contrary to nature, than to the positive precept of St. Paul. He mentions a very common case, in which people are obliged, by conscience, to marry. No mortal can promise that case shall never be theirs, which depends on the disposition of the body as much as a fever; and 'tis as reasonable to engage never to feel the one as the other. He tells us, the marks of the Holy Spirit are charity, humility, truth, and long suffering. Can anything be more uncharitable than damning eternally so many millions for not believing what they never heard? or prouder than calling their head a Vice-god? Pious frauds are avowedly permitted, and persecution applauded: these maxims cannot be dictated by the spirit of peace, which is so warmly preached in the Gospel.

The creeds of the apostles, and council of Nice, do not speak of the mass, or real presence, as articles of belief; and Athanasius asserts, whosoever believes according to them shall be saved. Jesus Christ, in answer to the lawyer, bids him love God above all things, and his neighbour as himself, as all that is necessary to salvation. When he describes the last judgment, he does not examine what sect, or what church, men were of, but how far they had been beneficent to mankind. Faith cannot determine reward or punishment, being involuntary, and only the consequence of conviction: we do not believe what we please, but what appears to us with the face of truth. As I do not mistake exclamation, invective, or ridicule for argument, I never recriminate on the lives of their popes and cardinals, when they urge the character of Henry the Eighth; I only answer, good actions are often done by ill men through interested motives, and 'tis the common method of Providence to bring good out of evil: history, both sacred and profane, furnishes many examples of it. When they tell me I have forsook the worship of my ancestors, I say I have had more ancestors heathen than Christian, and my faith is certainly ancients than theirs, since I have added nothing to the practice of the primitive professors of Christianity. As to the prosperity or extent of the dominion of their church, which Cardinal Bellarmine counts among the proofs of its orthodoxy, the Mahometans, who have larger empires, and have made a quicker progress, have a better plea for the visible protection of Heaven. If the fopperies of their religion were only fopperies, they ought to be complied with, wherever it is established, like any ridiculous dress in fashion; but I think them impieties: their devotions are a scandal to humanity from their nonsense; the mercenary deceits and barbarous tyranny of their ecclesiastics, inconsistent with moral honesty. If they object the diversity of our sects as a mark of reprobation, I desire them to consider, that objection has equal force against Christianity in general. When they thunder with the names of fathers and councils, they are surprised to find me as well (often better) acquainted with them than themselves. I show

them the variety of their doctrines, their virulent contests and various factions, instead of that union they boast of. I have never been attacked a second time in any of the towns where I have resided, and perhaps shall never be so again after my last battle, which was with an old priest, a learned man, particularly esteemed as a mathematician, and who has a head and heart as warm as poor Whiston's. When I first came hither, he visited me every day, and talked of me everywhere with such violent praise, that, had we been young people, God knows what would have been said. I have always the advantage of being quite calm on a subject which they cannot talk of without heat. He desired I would put on paper what I had said. I immediately wrote one side of a sheet, leaving the other for his answer. He carried it with him, promising to bring it the next day, since which time I have never seen it, though I have often demanded it, being ashamed of my defective Italian. I fancy he sent it to his friend the Archbishop of Milan. I have given over asking for it, as a desperate debt. He still visits me, but seldom, and in a cold sort of a way. When I have found disputants I less respected, I have sometimes taken pleasure in raising their hopes by my concessions: they are charmed when I agree with them in the number of the sacraments; but are horridly disappointed when I explain myself by saying the word sacrament is not to be found either in Old or New Testament; and one must be very ignorant not to know it is taken from the listing oath of the Roman soldiers, and means nothing more than a solemn, irrevocable engagement. Parents vow, in infant baptism, to educate their children in the Christian religion, which they take upon themselves by confirmation; the Lord's Supper is frequently renewing the same oath. Ordination and matrimony are solemn vows of a different kind: confession includes a vow of revealing all we know, and reforming what is amiss: extreme unction, the last vow, that we have lived in the faith we were baptised: in this sense they are all sacraments. As to the mysteries preached since, they were all invented long after, and some of them repugnant to the primitive institution.

This digression has carried me far from my criticism. You will laugh at my making any, on a work below examination. It may be of use to my granddaughters. I am persuaded it is a favourite author in all the nurseries in England, and has done much harm in the boarding schools, therefore ought to have his absurdities detected. You will think me angry with him for repeating a saying of mine, accompanied with a description of my person, which resembles me as much as one of the giants in Guildhall, and plainly shows he never saw me in his life. Indeed, I think, after being so many years dead and buried, I might be suffered to enjoy the right of the departed, and rest in peace. I cannot guess how I can possibly have incurred his indignation, except he takes for truth the literary correspondence between me and the M^{rs} Argens, whom I never saw, and who, with many high compliments, has attributed to me sentiments that never came into my head, and among them a criticism on Pamela, who is, however, more favourably treated than she deserves. The book of letters I mention never came to my hands till some time after it was printed, accidentally at Thoulouse.¹ I have need of all my philosophy on these occasions; though, they happen so often, I ought to be accustomed to them. When I print, I submit to be answered, and criticised; but as I never did, 'tis hard to be abused for other people's follies. A light thing said in gay company, should not be called upon for a serious defence, especially when it injures nobody. It is certain there are as many marriages as ever. Richardson is so eager for the multiplication of them, I suppose he is some parish curate, whose chief profit depends on weddings and christenings. He is not a man-midwife; for he would be better skilled in physic than to think fits and madness any ornament to the characters of his heroines: though his Sir Charles had no thoughts of marrying Clementina till she had lost her wits, and the divine Clarissa never acted prudently till she was in the same condition, and then very wisely desired to be carried

¹ The "M^{rs} Argens" meant probably the Marquis d'Argens; but I have not been able to find any trace of the spurious volume of letters referred to.—T.

to Bedlam, which is really all that is to be done in that case. Madness is as much a corporal distemper as the gout or asthma, never occasioned by affliction, or to be cured by the enjoyment of their extravagant wishes. Passion may indeed bring on a fit, but the disease is lodged in the blood, and it is not more ridiculous to attempt to relieve the gout by an embroidered slipper, than to restore reason by the gratification of wild desires.

Richardson is as ignorant in morality as he is in anatomy, when he declares abusing an obliging husband, or an indulgent parent, to be an innocent recreation. His Anna How and Charlotte Grandison are recommended as patterns of charming pleasantry, and applauded by his saint-like dames, who mistake pert folly for wit and humour, and impudence and ill nature for spirit and fire. Charlotte behaves like a humorsome child, and should have been used like one, and * * * well whipped in the presence of her friendly confidante Harriet. Lord Halifax very justly tells his daughter, that a husband's kindness is to be kindly received by a wife, even when he is drunk, and though it is wrapped up in never so much impertinence. Charlotte acts with an ingratitude that I think too black for human nature, with such coarse jokes and low expressions as are only to be heard among the lowest class of people. Women of that rank often plead a right to beat their husbands, when they don't cuckold them; and I believe this author was never admitted into higher company, and should confine his pen to the amours of housemaids, and the conversation at the steward's table, where I imagine he has sometimes intruded, though oftener in the servants' hall: yet, if the title be not a puff, this work has passed three editions. I do not forgive him his disrespect of old china, which is below nobody's taste, since it has been the D. of Argyll's, whose understanding has never been doubted either by his friends or enemies.

Richardson never had probably money enough to purchase any, or even a ticket for a masquerade, which gives him such an aversion to them; though his intended satire against them is very absurd on the account of his Harriet, since she might

have been carried off in the same manner if she had been going from supper with her grandmamma. Her whole behaviour, which he designs to be exemplary, is equally blamable and ridiculous. She follows the maxim of *Clarissa*, of declaring all she thinks to all the people she sees, without reflecting that in this mortal state of imperfection, fig-leaves are as necessary for our minds as our bodies, and 'tis as indecent to show all we think, as all we have. He has no idea of the manners of high life: his old Lord M. talks in the style of a country justice, and his virtuous young ladies romp like the wenches round a maypole. Such liberties as pass between Mr. Lovelace and his cousins, are not to be excused by the relation. I should have been much astonished if Lord Denbigh¹ should have offered to kiss me; and I dare swear Lord Trentham² never attempted such an impertinence to you.

With all my contempt I will take notice of one good thing; I mean his project of an English monastery. It was a favourite scheme of mine when I was fifteen; and had I then been mistress of an independent fortune, would certainly have executed it, and elected myself lady abbess. There would you and your ten children have been lost for ever. Yet such was the disposition of my early youth: so much was I unlike those girls that declare, if they had been born of the male kind they should have been great rakes, which is owning they have strong inclinations to — and drinking, and want only opportunity and impunity to exert them vigorously.

This tedious miscellany of a letter is promised to be delivered into your own hand; nay, further, that I shall have an account how you look, how you are dressed, and in what manner your room is furnished. Nothing relating to you is trivial to me; and if the performance answers the engagement, it will be a vast pleasure to your most affectionate mother.

¹ Lady Mary's cousin.—T.

² Son of Lady Mary's sister, Lady Gower, and, therefore, a cousin of Lady Bute.—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Nov. 2 [1755]

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am always pleased when I hear you have been with the Duke and Duchess of Portland, being persuaded they are both worthy and sincere friends of yours. I had wrote so many letters to dear Lady Oxford without receiving any answer, I was in great pain on her account. I will write again, though I lose so much of my writing: I am afraid it will only be more time and paper thrown away. I pity poor Lady Dalkeith,¹ who, perhaps, thinks herself at present an object of envy: she will soon be undeceived: no rich widow can marry on prudential motives; and where passion is only on one side, every marriage must be miserable. If she thought justly, she would know no man ever was in love with a woman of forty, since the Deluge: a boy may be so; but that blaze of straw only lasts till he is old enough to distinguish between youth and age, which generally happens about seventeen: till that time the whole sex appears angelic to a warm constitution; but as that is not Mr. Townshend's case, all she can hope is a cold complaisance, founded on gratitude, which is the most uncertain of all foundations for a lasting union. I know not how it is, whether obligers are apt to exact too large returns, or whether human pride naturally hates to remember obligations, but I have seldom seen friendships continue long, where there has been great benefits conferred; and I should think it the severest suffering to know I was a burden on the good nature of a man I loved, even if I met a mind so generous to dissemble a disgust which he could not help feeling. Lady Dalkeith had fond parents, and, as I have heard, an obliging husband. Her sorrowful hours are now coming on; they will be new to her, and 'tis a cruel addition to reflect (as she must do) that they have been her own purchasing. I wish my favourite Lady Mary [Coke] may make use of her

¹ Lady Dalkeith, eldest daughter of John Duke of Argyll, widow of Francis Earl of Dalkeith, and mother by him of Henry Duke of Buccleuch; married, secondly, the famous Charles Townshend. She was created Baroness Greenwich, with remainder to Charles and William Townshend, their sons; but both died unmarried in her lifetime, and the title became extinct.—W.

bitter experience to escape the snares laid for her: they are so various and so numerous, if she can avoid them, I shall think she has some supernatural assistance, and her force more wonderful than any of Don Quixote's heroes, though they vanquished whole armies by the strength of a single lance.

I have sent Lady J. Stuart¹ a little ring: if it comes safe, I will find something for Lady Anne;² I expect a letter of thanks. I think I have ill luck if none of my many grand-daughters have a turn for writing: she that has, will be distinguished by me. I have sent you three bills of exchange: it does not appear you have received one; what method to take I cannot imagine: I must depend on my new friend, who is a merchant of the Valteline. If the war breaks out, difficulties will increase; though our correspondence can hardly be more interrupted than it is already. I must endure it as set down by destiny in the long list of mortifications allotted to, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 22 [1756].

I HAVE received but this morning the first box of china Lord Bute has been so obliging to send me. I am quite charmed with it, but wish you had sent in it the note of the contents; it has been so long deposited, that it is not impossible some diminution may have happened. Everything that comes from England is precious to me, to the very hay that is employed in packing. I should be glad to know anything that could be an agreeable return from hence. There are many things I could send, but they are either contraband, or the custom would cost more than they are worth. I look out for a picture; the few that are in this part of Italy are those that remain in families, where they are entailed, and I might as well pretend to send you a palace. I am extremely pleased

¹ Lady Jane Stuart, afterwards married to Sir George Macartney.—W.

² Lady Anne Stuart, afterwards married to Lord Percy.—W.

with the account you give of your father's health. I have wrote to desire his consent in the disposal of poor Lady Oxford's legacy:¹ I do not doubt obtaining it. It has been both my interest and my duty to study his character, and I can say, with truth, I never knew any man so capable of a generous action.

A late adventure here makes a great noise from the rank of the people concerned: the Marchioness Lyscinnia Bentivoglio, who was heiress of one branch of the Martinenghi, and brought forty thousand gold sequins to her husband, and the expectation of her father's estate, three thousand pounds per annum, the most magnificent palace at Brescia (finer than any in London), another in the country, and many other advantages of woods, plate, jewels, &c. The Cardinal Bentivoglio, his uncle, thought he could not choose better, though his nephew might certainly have chose among all the Italian ladies, being descended from the sovereigns of Bologna, actually a grandee of Spain, a noble Venetian, and in possession of twenty-five thousand pounds sterling per annum, with immense wealth in palaces, furniture, and absolute dominion in some of his lands. The girl was pretty, and the match was with the satisfaction of both families; but she brought with her such a diabolical temper, and such *Luciferan* pride, that neither husband, relations, or servants, had ever a moment's peace with her. After about eight years' warfare, she eloped one fair morning and took refuge in Venice, leaving her two daughters, the eldest scarce six years old, to the care of the exasperated marquis. Her father was so angry at her extravagant conduct, he would not, for some time, receive her into his house; but, after some months, and much solicitation, parental fondness prevailed, and she remained with him ever since, notwithstanding all the efforts of her husband, who tried kindness, submission, and threats, to no purpose. The cardinal came twice to Brescia, her own father joined his entreaties, nay, *his Holiness* wrote a letter with his own hand, and made use of the Church authority, but he found it harder to reduce one woman than ten heretics. She was inflexible,

¹ The Countess of Oxford died December 8, 1755.—T.

and lived ten years in this state of reprobation. Her father died last winter, and left her his whole estate for her life, and afterwards to her children. Her eldest was now marriageable, and disposed of to the nephew of Cardinal Valentino Gonzagua, first minister at Rome. She would neither appear at the wedding, nor take the least notice of a dutiful letter sent by the bride. The old cardinal (who was passionately fond of his illustrious name) was so much touched with the apparent extinction of it, that it was thought to have hastened his death. She continued in the enjoyment of her ill humour, living in great splendour, though almost solitary, having, by some impertinence or other, disgusted all her acquaintance, till about a month ago, when her woman brought her a basin of broth, which she usually drank in her bed. She took a few spoonfuls of it, and then cried out it was so bad it was impossible to endure it. Her chambermaids were so used to hear her exclamations they had not the worse opinion of it, and eat it up very comfortably; they were both seized with the same pangs, and died the next day. She sent for physicians, who judged her poisoned; but, as she had taken a small quantity, by the help of antidotes she recovered, yet is still in a languishing condition. Her cook was examined, and racked, always protesting entire innocence, and swearing he had made the soup in the same manner he was accustomed. You may imagine the noise of this affair. She loudly accused her husband, it being the interest of no other person to wish her out of the world. He resides at Ferrara (about which the greatest part of his lands lie), and was soon informed of this accident. He sent doctors to her, whom she would not see, sent vast alms to all the convents to pray for her health, and ordered a number of masses to be said in every church of Brescia and Ferrara. He sent letters to the Senate at Venice, and published manifestoes in all the capital cities, in which he professes his affection to her, and abhorrence of any attempt against her, and has a cloud of witnesses that he never gave her the least reason of complaint, and even since her leaving him has always spoke of her with kindness, and courted her return.

He is said to be remarkably sweet tempered, and has the best character of any man of quality in this country. If the death of her women did not seem to confirm it, her accusation would gain credit with nobody. She is certainly very sincere in it herself, being so persuaded he has resolved her death, that she dare not take the air, apprehending to be assassinated, and has imprisoned herself in her chamber, where she will neither eat nor drink anything that she does not see tasted by all her servants. The physicians now say that perhaps the poison might fall into the broth accidentally; I confess I do not perceive the possibility of it. As to the cook suffering the rack, that is a mere jest where people have money enough to bribe the executioner. I decide nothing; but such is the present destiny of a lady, who would have been one of Richardson's heroines, having never been suspected of the least gallantry; hating, and being hated universally; of a most noble spirit, it being proverbial, "As proud as the Marchioness Lyscinnia."

I am afraid I have tired you with my long story: I thought it singular enough to amuse you. I believe your censure will be different from that of the ladies here, who all range themselves in the party of the Marquis Guido. They say he is a handsome man, little past forty, and would easily find a second wife, notwithstanding the suspicion raised on this occasion. Many customs, and some laws, are as extraordinary here as the situation of the capital.

I would write to Lord Bute to thank him, if I did not think it would be giving him trouble. I have not less gratitude: I desire you would assure him of it, and that I am to you both

Your most affectionate mother.

My blessing to your little ones.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

April 1 [1756].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have this minute received yours of Feb. 1. I had one before (which I have answered), in which you mention some changes amongst your ministerial subalterns. I see the motions of the puppets, but not the master

that directs them ; nor can guess at him. By the help of some miserable newspapers, with my own reflections, I can form such a dim telescope as serves astronomers to survey the moon. I can discern spots and inequalities, but your beauties (if you have any) are invisible to me : your provinces of politics, gallantry, and literature, all *terra incognita*. The merchant who undertook to deliver my ring to Lady Jane, assures me it is delivered, though I have no advice of it either from her or you. Here are two new fortunes far superior to Miss Crawley's. They are become so by an accident which would be very extraordinary in London. Their father was a Greek, and had been several years chief farmer of the customs at Venice. About ten days ago, a creditor, who had a demand of five hundred crowns, was very importunate with him. He answered he was not satisfied it was due to him, and would examine his accounts. After much pressing without being able to obtain any other reply, the fellow drew his stiletto, and in one stroke stabbed him to the heart. The noise of his fall brought in his servants ; the resolute assassin drew a pistol from his pocket and shot himself through the head. The merchant has left no will, and is said to have been worth four millions of sequins, all which will be divided between two daughters. If it be only half as much, they are (I believe) the greatest heiresses in Europe. It is certain he has died immensely rich. The eldest lady is but eighteen ; and both of them are reputed to be very beautiful. I hear they declare they will choose husbands of their own country and religion, and refuse any other prospects. If they keep their resolution I shall admire them much. Since they are destined to be a prey, 'tis a sort of patriotism to enrich their own country with their spoils. You put me out of patience when you complain you want subjects to entertain me. You need not go out of your walls for that purpose. You have within them ten strangers to me, whose characters interest me extremely. I should be glad to know something of them inside and out. What provision of wit and beauty has Heaven allotted them ? I shall be sorry if all the talents have fallen into the male part

of your family. Do not forget, amongst the books, Fielding's Posthumous Works, his Journey to the next World, and Jon. Wild's Memoirs; also those of a Young Lady, and the History of London. I have said this already, but am afraid the letter is lost among many others.

I congratulate Mrs. Dunch on her good fortune; the best proof of the force of industry, without any other qualification. She has brought more projects to bear than anybody I ever knew; many which I am sure I should have failed in. Tell me if her pension is continued, which was one of her views when I left England.

This is a strange miscellaneous letter; consider my age, and forgive the weaknesses of your most affectionate mother.

Compliments to Lord Bute, and blessings to the rest of your dear ones.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 19 [1756].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am sorry to begin this letter with a sort of complaint, though I am persuaded Mr. Prescott is more to blame than you. However, I am really concerned that he imagines he has reason to be offended. I never saw him, but I know these sort of people are apt to be very punctilious; and he is so much displeased (as he says) at the reception you gave him, he desires to decline the correspondence, which I hoped would have been more safe and expeditious than any other I have hitherto hit upon. I wish you would inquire whether the Duke and Duchess of Portland have received my letters, which I sent at the same time with yours, but have had no return.

I congratulate my granddaughters on being born in an age so much enlightened. Sentiments are certainly extreme silly, and only qualify young people to be the bubbles of all their acquaintance. I do not doubt the frequency of assemblies has introduced a more enlarged way of thinking; it is a kind of public education, which I have always thought as necessary for girls as for boys. A woman married at five-and-twenty,

from under the eye of a strict parent, is commonly as ignorant as she was at five; and no more capable of avoiding the snares, and struggling with the difficulties, she will infallibly meet with in the commerce of the world. The knowledge of mankind (the most useful of all knowledge) can only be acquired by conversing with them. Books are so far from giving that instruction, they fill the head with a set of wrong notions, from whence spring the tribes of Clarissas, Harriets, &c. Yet such was the method of education when I was in England, which I had it not in my power to correct; the young will always adopt the opinions of all their companions, rather than the advice of their mothers.

There is nothing talked of here but earthquakes, the greatest part of which I believe to be wholly imaginary. But the panic is so spread, that if a rat runs over the ceiling it is supposed a shock, and here are daily processions, pilgrimages, &c., to deprecate divine vengeance. I am tempted to laugh, but restrained by prudential considerations. Here is a second bill for 50*l.* on Child. I have already told you fifteen is to pay for the watches, thirty to buy a watch as my token to Lady Anne, and the odd five to pay for such books as you may occasionally send.¹

I am very well pleased with Lady Jane's letter, and wish it was longer. My compliments and thanks to Lord Bute; I am afraid his picture will be long in coming, if I can get it at all.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 30 [1756].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I sent you a long letter very lately, and enclosed one to Lady Jane, and also a second bill for fifty pounds, which I hope you have received, though I fear I cannot prevail on Mr. Prescot to take care of my letters; if he should do it, I beg you would be very obliging to him; remember, civility costs nothing and buys everything; your daughters should engrave that maxim in their hearts.

¹ A portion of the manuscript is here wanting.—T.

I am sorry Sir William Lowther¹ died unmarried; he ought to have left some of his breed, which are almost extinct: he died unluckily for his acquaintance, though I think fortunately for himself, being yet ignorant of the ingratitude and vileness of mankind. He knew not what it was to lament misplaced obligations, and thought himself blessed in many friends, whom a short time would have shown to be worthless, mercenary, designing scoundrels. The most tender disposition grows callous by miserable experience; I look upon it as the reason why so many old people leave immense wealth, in a lump, to heirs they neither love nor esteem; and others, like Lord Sundon, leave it, at random, to they know not who. He was not a covetous man, but had seen so little merit, and was so well acquainted with the vices of mankind, I believe he thought there was none among [them] deserved any particular distinction. I have passed a long life, and may say, with truth, have endeavoured to purchase friends; accident has put it in my power to confer great benefits, yet I never met with any return, nor indeed any true affection, but from dear Lady Oxford, who owed me nothing. Did not these considerations restrain natural generosity, I am of opinion we should see many Sir William Lowthers; neither is it saying much in favour of the human heart: it is certain the highest gratification of vanity is found in bestowing; but, when we plainly foresee being exposed by it to insults, nay, perhaps, abuses, which are often liberally dispersed by those who wish to hide they are obliged, we abandon the pleasure rather than suffer the consequence. The first shocks received from this conduct of protesting friends, are felt very severely. I now expect them, and they affect me with no more surprise than rain after sunshine. The little good I do is scattered with a sparing hand, against my inclination; but I now know the necessity of managing² hopes, as the only links that bind at-

¹ Sir William Lowther, Bart., Knight of the Shire for Cumberland, died March 15, 1756. Mr. Dallaway informs us that he "bequeathed 100,000*l.* in legacies to his several friends with whom he was chiefly associated."—T.

² Lady Mary here employs the word in the sense of the French verb *ménager*.—T.

tachment, or even secure us from injuries. Was it possible for me to elevate anybody from the station in which they are born, I now would not do it: perhaps it is a rebellion against that Providence that has placed them; all we ought to do is to endeavour to make them easy in the rank assigned them.

I hope you will not forget to send me the bill of lading, without which I may chance to lose the box, which is very precious to, my dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, Nov. 23 [1756].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I heartily wish you joy of your present situation. Lord Bute has attained it by a very uncommon road; I mean, an acknowledged honour and probity.¹ I have but one short instruction (pardon the word) to give on his account; that he will never forget the real interest of prince and people cannot be divided, and are almost as closely united as that of soul and body. I could preach long on this subject, but I ought to consider your time is now fully taken up, and you can have no leisure for reading my tedious letters. I shall henceforward relinquish the motherly prerogative I have hitherto indulged, of tiring your patience with long discourses. I went to Venice a few days ago, and in the house of General Graham (whose obliging friendship I shall ever gratefully own) I saw Mr. Cunningham and his lady. They appeared to me to have great merit and politeness; they offered in a very friendly manner to carry my present to you;

¹ This alludes to the fact of Lord Bute's having been appointed groom of the stole to the young Prince of Wales in October, 1756. Lord Wharncliffe remarks, that he "continued in that office with the new king till he was appointed secretary of state, on the resignation of Lord Holderness, on the 25th of March, 1761. On the resignation of the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Bute became, on the 26th of May, 1762, first lord of the Treasury, which office he resigned on the 8th of April, 1763, and never afterwards took an active part in public life."—T.

but, designing to proceed on their journey in these perilous times, I thought it better to delay it. I hope to send it, early in the spring, by the hand of Lord Archer's son, who is now at Rome. It is possible a peace may be treating by that time. God bless you and yours; which is the constant prayer of, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

I have wrote you several letters since my arrival here, which I hope you have received, though you do not mention them. My compliments to Lord Bute.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, Dec. 28 [1756].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of November 29th, with great pleasure, some days before I had the box of books, and am highly delighted with the snuff-box: that manufacture is at present as much in fashion at Venice as at London. In general, all the shops are full of English merchandise, and they boast [of] everything as coming from London, in the same style as they used to do from Paris. I was showed (of their own invention) a set of furniture, in a taste entirely new: it consists of eight large armed-chairs, the same number of sconces, a table, and prodigious looking-glass, all of glass. It is impossible to imagine their beauty; they deserve being placed in a prince's dressing-room, or grand cabinet; the price demanded is 400*l*. They would be a very proper decoration for the apartment of a prince so young and beautiful as ours.

The present ministry promises better counsels than have been followed in my time. I am extremely glad to hear the continuation of your father's health, and that you follow his advice. I am really persuaded (without any dash of partiality) no man understands the interest of England better, or has it more at heart. I am obliged to him for whatever he does for you. I will not indulge myself in troubling you with long letters or commissions, when you are charged with so much business at home and abroad; I shall only repeat the Turkish maxim, which I think includes all that is necessary in a *court-*

life: "Caress the favourites, avoid the unfortunate, and trust nobody." You may think the second rule ill natured: melancholy experience has convinced me of the ill consequence of mistaking distress for merit; there is no mistake more productive of evil. I could add many arguments to enforce this truth, but will not tire your patience.

I am exceedingly obliged to General Graham for his civilities; he tells me he has wrote to you the account of poor Mr. Cunningham's sad story;¹ I wish it do not come too late: the newspaper says the mean capitulator is rewarded; I fear the generous defender will be neglected.²

I intend to correspond with Lady Jane. I confess I was much pleased with her little letter; and, supposing Lady Mary is commenced fine lady, she may have no leisure to read or answer an old grandmother's letters. I presume Lady Jane is to play least in sight till her sister is disposed of; if she loves writing, it may be an employment not disagreeable to herself, and will be extremely grateful to me, who am ever, my dear child,

Your affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

FROM MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Jan. 4 [1757].

YOURS of the 8th Dec. came hither on the 28th, which is the time in which letters usually pass between London and

¹ This relates to the affair of Minorca, which led to the execution of Admiral Byng. Lord Stanhope thus alludes to Cunningham's conduct: "Captain Cunningham had been engineer in second in Minorca, but being promoted to a majority in England, was on his way homewards, and was only delayed at Nice by the delivery of his wife and the sickness of his children. It was at Nice that he heard of the French designs against his former comrades at St. Philip's. He immediately exclaimed, 'They will want engineers!' and determined at all risks to rejoin them, first expending what money he had in purchasing timber for the platforms and other things needful for defence, and in hiring a ship for the voyage; nor did he hesitate, when his country's service was at stake, to leave his wife and children sick in a land of strangers."—(*History of England*, third edition, iv. 65.) In repelling the assault, Cunningham was maimed in the right arm by the thrust of a bayonet.—T.

² Abandoned by Byng and the fleet, the garrison, after a gallant struggle, surrendered in June, 1756. General Blakeney, whom Lady Mary calls the "mean capitulator," was created an Irish baron, with the title of Lord Blakeney, which became extinct in 1761.—T.

Venice. The last I had before was dated the 19th Dec., 1754. I received it 19th Jan., 1755. Any you sent in 1756, besides this of the 8th Dec., miscarried. I bundle up all your letters and keep a list of the dates of what I send you, so that I cannot mistake as to either. I do not recollect that any letter sent me from a foreign country besides yours ever miscarried. As to those I send abroad, I always send two servants with them to the post-office, so that I do not trust to one servant's honesty, and the officer of the post sees there is evidence of the delivery, so that his neglect or fraud may easily appear. This method is taken by all foreign ministers at all courts.

I have now something to mention which I believe will be agreeable to you. I mean some particulars relating to my Lord Bute, which you have not learned from the prints or from our minister at Venice. He stood higher in the late P. of Wales's favour than any man. His attendance at Leicester House, where this young prince¹ has resided ever since his father's death, continued without intermission till new officers were to be placed about him. It is said that another person was designed to be groom of the stole, but that the prince's earnest request was complied with in my lord's favour. It is supposed that the governors, preceptors, &c., that were before about him are now laid aside, and that my lord is his principal adviser.

It is not easy to express how well bred and reasonable the prince always appears at his public levee every Thursday, and on all other occasions. The K. of France and the Empress of Germany always show themselves to great advantage, and this young prince's behaviour is equal to that of either of them. He is supposed to know the true state of this country, and to have the best inclinations to do all in his power to make it flourish.

These appearances do much honour to my lord, and the continuance of his favour is, I believe, wished by all that are unconnected with some of those who have been ministers of state.

¹ Afterwards George the Third.—T.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, April 3 [1757].¹

MY DEAR CHILD,—Yours of Feb. 20th relieved me from a great deal of uneasiness that I had suffered a long time from your silence. Why will you not order one of your daughters to write, when you are unable to do it? But I have said so much on that subject I will mention it no more. Many of my letters to you remain unanswered, particularly that in which is enclosed the captain's note for the box I have directed to Lady Augusta Stuart.

Several English are expected here at the Ascension. I hope to find an opportunity of sending you the necklace. I have been persuaded to take a little house here, as living in lodgings is really disagreeable. However, I still retain my favourite palace at Padua, where I intend to reside the greatest part of the year. In the mean time, I amuse myself with buying and placing furniture, in which I only consult neatness and convenience, having long renounced (as it is fit I should) all things bordering on magnificence. I confess I sometimes indulge my taste in baubles, which is as excusable in our second childhood as our first. I am sorry the Duchess of Portland has not received my thanks for her obliging letter. I also desired to know the name of the merchant to whom the Duke consigned the legacy left me by Lady Oxford, which I have not yet heard of. General Graham is gone into the country for his health. I hope his return soon, but he is preparing for a tour on the frontiers of these dominions. I see in the newspapers the names of the following books: *Fortunate Mistress*, *Accomplished Rake*, *Mrs. Charke's Memoirs*, *Modern Lovers*, *History of Two Orphans*, *Memoirs of David Ranger*, *Miss [Mos]tyn*, *Dick Hazard*, *History of a Lady Platonist*, *Sophia Shakespear*, *Jasper Banks*, *Frank Hammond*, *Sir Andrew Thompson*, *Van a Clergyman's Son*, *Cleanthes and Celimena*. I do not doubt at least the greatest part of these are trash, lumber, &c.; however, they will serve to pass away

¹ The letter is indorsed 1756; but the date should, no doubt, be 1757.—T.

the idle time, if you will be so kind to send them to your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and hearty blessing to all my grandchildren.

Lord Roseberry is in this town at present; no bad figure, but—I am sorry for him. He is as ridiculous as a man that would carry oysters to Colchester; he is at the expense of the carriage, and may find as good in every corner.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, May 30 [1757].

It is a long time since I have heard from my dear child, though I have wrote several times, and, indeed, never fail to do it, at least once in a fortnight, but I hear many packets have been lost, which may occasion this interruption of our correspondence. I will not frighten myself by supposing that you or your family are indisposed. I seize with great pleasure the opportunity of writing by a sure hand; I send this by Mr. Anderson, who has also promised to deliver to you a pearl necklace consisting of forty-six pearls, and a pair of earrings, which are not altogether worthy to accompany it, but if you do not like them, present them to Lady Jane to make up for the small value of her ring. It is some months since I sent Lady Augusta a plaything, which I intended to be followed by a box of various others if that came safe; I have hitherto had no account of it from you, nor an answer to a question I have desired you to ask more than once, what is the name of the merchant to whom the Duke of Portland consigned the legacy left me by dear Lady Oxford? Here are a great number of English travellers, and two ladies, one of them Mrs. Greville, sister-in-law to your old friend Mrs. Broughton. Unavoidable visits, joined with fitting and furnishing, hardly leave me any time to dispose of to my own taste, which is (as it ought to be) more solitary than ever. I left my hermitage, that what effects I have might not be dissipated by servants, as they would have been, probably, if I had died there;

I begged of your father (when I was at Avignon) that they might be yours, which he generously promised me. To say truth, I am very uneasy, knowing nobody here I can confide in, General Graham being gone for a long time, and the British minister¹ here such a scandalous fellow, in every sense of that word, he is not to be trusted to change a sequin, despised by this government for his smuggling, which was his original profession, and always surrounded with pimps and brokers, who are his privy councillors. Sir J. Gray was, as I am told, universally esteemed, but, alas, he is at Naples. I wish the maxims of Queen Elizabeth were revived, who always chose for her foreign ministers men whose birth and behaviour would make the nation respected, people being apt to look upon them as a sample of their countrymen; if those now employed are so, Lord have mercy upon us! I have seen only Mr. Villette at Turin, who knew how to support his character. How much the nation has suffered by false intelligence, I believe you are very sensible of, and how impossible it is to get truth either from a fool or a knave. Company forces me upon an abrupt conclusion. I am ever, my dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, July 7 [1757].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours last night, which gave me a pleasure beyond what I am able to express (this is not according to the common expression, but a simple truth). I had not heard from you of some months, and was in my heart very uneasy, from the apprehension of some misfortune in your family; though, as I always endeavour to avoid the anticipation of evil, which is a source of pain, and can never be productive of any good, I stifled my fear as much as possible, yet it cost me many a midnight pang. You have been the passion of my life; you need thank me for nothing;

¹ John Murray, the English resident at Venice. Lady Mary's disputes with him are the frequent subject of complaints in her letters.—T.

I gratify myself whenever I can oblige you. I have already given into the hands of Mr. Anderson a long letter for you, but it is now of so old a date, I accompany it with another. His journey has been delayed by a very extraordinary accident, which might have proved as fatal as that of Lord Drumlanrig, or that, which I think worse, which happened to my convert Mr. Butler: fortunately it has only served to set the characters of both the governor and the pupil in a more amiable light. Mr. Archer was at breakfast with six other English gentlemen, and handling a blunderbuss, which he did not know to be charged, it burst, and distributed among them six chained bullets, beside the splinters; which flew about in the manner you may imagine. His own hand was considerably wounded, yet the first word he spoke (without any regard to his own smart and danger) was, "I hope nobody is hurt:"—nobody was hurt but himself, who has been ever since under cure, to preserve two of his fingers which were very much torn. He had also a small rasure on his cheek, which is now quite healed. The paternal care and tenderness Mr. Anderson has shown on this occasion, has recommended him to everybody. I wanted nothing to raise that esteem which is due to his sterling honesty and good heart, which I do not doubt you value as much as I do. If that wretch Hickman had been——But this is a melancholy thought, and as such ought to be suppressed.

How important is the charge of youth! and how useless all the advantages of nature and fortune without a well-turned mind! I have lately heard of a very shining instance of this truth, from two gentlemen (very deserving ones they seem to be) who have had the curiosity to travel into Moscovy, and now return to England with Mr. Archer. I inquired after my old acquaintance Sir Charles [Hanbury] Williams, who I hear is much broken, both in his spirits and constitution. How happy might that man have been, if there had been added to his natural and acquired endowments a dash of morality! If he had known how to distinguish between false and true felicity; and, instead of seeking to increase an estate

already too large, and hunting after pleasures that have made him rotten and ridiculous, he had bounded his desires of wealth, and followed the dictates of his conscience. His servile ambition has gained him two yards of red ribbon, and an exile into a miserable country, where there is no society and so little taste, that I believe he suffers under a dearth of flatterers. This is said for the use of your growing sons, whom I hope no golden temptations will induce to marry women they cannot love, or comply with measures they do not approve. All the happiness this world can afford is more within reach than is generally supposed. Whoever seeks pleasure will undoubtedly find pain; whoever will pursue ease will as certainly find pleasures. The world's esteem is the highest gratification of human vanity; and that is more easily obtained in a moderate fortune than an overgrown one, which is seldom possessed, never gained, without envy. I say esteem; for, as to applause, it is a youthful pursuit, never to be forgiven after twenty, and naturally succeeds the childish desire of catching the setting sun, which I can remember running very hard to do: a fine thing truly if it could be caught; but experience soon shows it to be impossible. A wise and honest man lives to his own heart, without that silly splendour that makes him a prey to knaves, and which commonly ends in his becoming one of the fraternity. I am very glad to hear Lord Bute's decent economy sets him above anything of that kind. I wish it may become national. A collective body of men differs very little from a single man; frugality is the foundation of generosity. I have often been complimented on the English heroism, who have thrown away so many millions, without any prospect of advantage to themselves, purely to succour a distressed princess. I never could hear these praises without some impatience; they sounded to me like the panegyrics made by the dependents on the D. [Duke] of N. [Newcastle] and poor Lord Oxford, bubbled when they were commended, and laughed at when undone. Some late events will, I hope, open our eyes: we shall see we are an island, and endeavour to extend our commerce rather

than the Quixote reputation of redressing wrongs and placing diadems on heads that should be equally indifferent to us. When time has ripened mankind into common sense, the name of conqueror will be an odious title. I could easily prove that, had the Spaniards established a trade with the Americans, they would have enriched their country more than by the addition of twenty-two kingdoms, and all the mines they now work—I do not say possess; since, though they are the proprietors, others enjoy the profit.

My letter is too long; I beg your pardon for it; 'tis seldom I have an opportunity of speaking to you, and I would have you know all the thoughts of your most affectionate mother.

I desire you would thank your father for the jewels; you know I have nothing of my own.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Sept. 30, 1757.

MY DEAR CHILD,—Lord Bute has been so obliging as to let me know your safe delivery, and the birth of another daughter;¹ may she be as meritorious in your eyes as you are in mine! I can wish nothing better to you both, though I have some reproaches to make you. Daughter! daughter! don't call names; you are always abusing my pleasures, which is what no mortal will bear. Trash, lumber, sad stuff, are the titles you give to my favourite amusement. If I called a white staff a stick of wood, a gold key gilded brass, and the ensigns of illustrious orders coloured strings, this may be philosophically true, but would be very ill received. We have all our playthings: happy are they that can be contented with those they can obtain: those hours are spent in the wisest manner, that can easiest shade the ills of life, and are the least productive of ill consequences. I think my time better employed in reading the adventures of imaginary people, than the Duchess of Marlborough's, who passed the latter years of her life in paddling with her will, and contriving schemes of

¹ Lady Louisa Stuart, born Aug. 15, 1757.—T.

plaguingsome, and extracting praise from others, to no purpose; eternally disappointed, and eternally fretting. The active scenes are over at my age. I indulge, with all the art I can, my taste for reading. If I would confine it to valuable books, they are almost as rare as valuable men. I must be content with what I can find. As I approach a second childhood, I endeavour to enter into the pleasures of it. Your youngest son is, perhaps, at this very moment riding on a pocker with great delight, not at all regretting that it is not a gold one, and much less wishing it an Arabian horse, which he would not know how to manage. I am reading an idle tale, not expecting wit or truth in it, and am very glad it is not metaphysics to puzzle my judgment, or history to mislead my opinion. He fortifies his health by exercise; I calm my cares by oblivion. The methods may appear low to busy people; but, if he improves his strength, and I forget my infirmities, we attain very desirable ends. I shall be much pleased if you would send your letters in Mr. Pitt's packet.

I have not heard from your father of a long time. I hope he is well, because you do not mention him.

I am ever, dear child, your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Oct. 8 [1757].

I AM sorry, my dear child, you fatigued yourself with writing during your lying-in. You need thank me for nothing. I have already told you (and it is literally true) that I please myself whenever it is in my power to do anything obliging to you.

I explained myself ill, or you did not take the right sense of my demand. I would know of Mr. Prescott the name of the merchant to whom he resigned Lady Oxford's legacy. I have received both your bills of lading, and am in daily expectation of the ship, which is not yet arrived. I am very glad to hear of your father's health; mine is better than I ought to expect

at my time of life. I believe Mr. Anderson talks partially of me, as to my looks; I know nothing of the matter. It is eleven years since I have seen my figure in a glass: the last reflexion I saw there was so disagreeable, I resolved to spare myself such mortifications for the future, and shall continue that resolution to my life's end. To indulge all pleasing amusements, and avoid all images that give disgust, is, in my opinion, the best method to attain or confirm health. I ought to consider yours, and shorten my letter, while you are in a condition that makes reading uneasy to you. God bless you and yours, my dear child. It is the most ardent wish of

Your affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Oct. 9, 1757.]

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of September 15, this morning, October 9, and am exceedingly glad of the health of you and your family. I am fond of your little Louisa: to say truth, I was afraid of a Bess, a Peg, or a Suky, which all give me the ideas of washing-tubs and scouring of kettles.

I am much obliged to Mr. Hamilton, which is, according to the academy of compliments, more his goodness than my deserts: I saw him but twice, and both times in mixed company: but am surprised you have never mentioned Lord Roseberry, by whom I sent a packet to you, and took some pains to show him civilities: he breakfasted with me at Padua: I gave him bread-and-butter of my own manufacture, which is the admiration of all the English. He promised to give you full information of myself and all my employments. He seemed delighted with my house and gardens, and perhaps has forgot he ever saw me, or anything that belonged to me. We have had many English here. Mr. Greville, his lady, and her suite of adorers, deserved particular mention: he was so good to present me with his curious book:¹ since the days of the Honour-

¹ Of the book in question, Horace Walpole, in a letter to General Conway, speaks thus: "A wonderful book, by a more wonderful author, Greville. It is called *Maxims and Characters*; several of the former are pretty; all the latter so absurd, that one in particular, which at the beginning you take for the character of a man, turns out to be the character of a post-chaise."—W

able Mr. Edward Howard, nothing has ever been published like it. I told him the age wanted an Earl of Dorset to celebrate it properly; and he was so well pleased with that speech, that he visited me every day, to the great comfort of madame, who was entertained, meanwhile, with parties of pleasure of another kind, though I fear I lost his esteem at last by refusing to correspond with him. However, I qualified my denial by complaining of my bad eyes not permitting me to multiply my correspondents. I could give you the characters of many other travellers if I thought it would be of any use to you. It is melancholy to see the pains our pious minister takes to debauch the younger sort of them: but, as you say, all is melancholy that relates to Great Britain. I have a high value for Mr. Pitt's¹ probity and understanding, without having the honour of being acquainted with him. I am persuaded he is able to do whatever is within the bounds of possibility; but there is an Augean stable to be cleaned, and several other labours, that I doubt if Hercules himself would be equal to.

If the Duke of Kingston only intends to build a hunting-seat at Thoresby, I think it is most proper for the situation, which was certainly by nature never designed for a palace. I hope he will not employ the same architect that built his house in London. You see I am not entirely divested of family prejudices, though I thank the Lord they are not lively enough to give me violent uneasiness. I cannot help wishing well to my ever dear brother's children: however, I have the conscious satisfaction of knowing I have done my duty towards them, as far as my power extended. Nobody can be served against their will. May all your young ones grow up an honour to you! I am told one objection to Lord Mountstuart, that he is too handsome, which is a fault that will certainly mend every day. I should be glad to hear your daughters accused of the same defect. My paper is out: I have scarce room to assure my dear child that I am ever your most affectionate mother.

¹ The first Earl of Chatham.—W.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[November 12, 1757.]

I RECEIVED yours of October 15 yesterday, November 11. I was quite frightened at the relation of your indisposition, and am very glad I did not know it till it was over. I hope you will no more suffer the physicians to try experiments with so good a constitution as yours. I am persuaded mineral waters, which are provided by nature, are the best, perhaps the only real remedies, particularly that of Tunbridge, of which I have a great opinion. I would not trouble you with a long letter, which may be uneasy to you to read.

My most fervent wishes are for your health and happiness. Whatever I write to my daughter is for you.

 TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.¹

Jan. 20, 1758.

I STAY here, though I am on many accounts better pleased with Padua. Our great minister, the resident, affects to treat me as one in the opposition. I am inclined to laugh rather than be displeased at his political airs; yet, as I am among strangers, they are disagreeable; and, could I have foreseen them, would have settled in some other part of the world; but I have taken leases of my houses, been at much pains and expense in furnishing them, and am no longer of an age to make long journeys. I saw, some months ago, a countryman of yours (Mr. Adam²), who desires to be introduced to you. He seemed to me, in one short visit, to be a man of genius, and I have heard his knowledge of architecture much applauded. He is now in England.

Your account of the changes in ministerial affairs do not surprise me;³ but nothing could be more astonishing than their all coming in together. It puts me in mind of a friend

¹ This letter, or fragment of a letter, was published by Mr. Dallaway as a part of a letter dated "Jan. 20, 1758." I have not found the original.—T.

² Mr. Robert Adam, who built Caenwood, Luton Park, &c., and the Adelphi, in conjunction with his brother. His designs are published.—D.

³ Alluding to the coalition of parties, which took place in the summer of 1757.—T.

of mine who had a large family of favourite animals; and not knowing how to convey them to his country-house in separate equipages, he ordered a Dutch mastiff, a cat and her kittens, a monkey, and a parrot, all to be packed up together in one large hamper, and sent by a waggon. One may easily guess how this set of company made their journey; and I have never been able to think of the present compound ministry without the idea of barking, scratching, and screaming.¹ 'Tis too ridiculous a one, I own, for the gravity of their characters, and still more for the situation the kingdom is in; for as much as one may encourage the love of laughter, 'tis impossible to be indifferent to the welfare of one's native country.

Adieu! Your affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Feb. 21 [1758?].

MY DEAR CHILD,—If half of the letters I have sent to you have reached you, I believe you think I have always a pen in my hand; but, I am really so uneasy by your long silence, I cannot forbear inquiring the reason of it, by all the methods I can imagine. My time of life is naturally inclined to fear; and though I resist (as well as I can) all the infirmities incident to age, I feel but too sensibly the impressions of melancholy, when I have any doubt of your welfare. You fancy, perhaps, that the public papers give me information enough; and that when I do not see in them any misfortune of yours, I ought to conclude you have none. I can assure you I never see any, excepting by accident. Our resident

¹ Lord Wharncliffe remarks that "this story has been versified by Lord Byron (*Don Juan*, canto iii. stanza 18), but without any reference to the source from whence he drew it." It is remarkable that Lady Mary herself appears to have appropriated the passage from a letter of her friend, Miss Tichborne, dated July 25, 1757, among the Wortley papers. The original passage is as follows: "The world was prepared for seeing victory declare on the side of any one of them; but nothing could be more astonishing than their all coming in together, as is now the case, and though their professions have been directly opposite while they were out, they now undertake to agree in everything. It put me in mind of a friend of mine who had a large family of favourite animals; and not knowing how to convey them to his country-house in separate equipages, he ordered a Dutch mastiff, a cat and her kittens, a monkey, and parrot, all to be packed together in one."

has not the good breeding to send them to me ; and after having asked for them once or twice, and being told they were engaged, I am unwilling to demand a trifle at the expense of thanking a man who does not desire to oblige me ; indeed, since the ministry of Mr. Pitt, he is so desirous to signalise his zeal for the contrary faction, he is perpetually saying ridiculous things, to manifest his attachment ; and, as he looks upon me (nobody knows why) to be the friend of a man I never saw, he has not visited me once this winter. The misfortune is not great. I cannot help laughing at my being mistaken for a politician. I have often been so, though I ever thought politics so far removed from my sphere. I cannot accuse myself of dabbling in them, even when I heard them talked over in all companies ; but, as the old song says,

" Tho' through the wide world we should range,
'Tis in vain from our fortune to fly."

I forget myself and tattle on, without remembering you are too much employed to throw away time on reading insignificant letters ; you should, however, forgive them, in consideration of the real affection of your very loving mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Venice, May 3, 1758.]

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of the 20th of Feb. yesterday, May the 2nd, so irregular is the post. I could forgive the delay, but I cannot pardon the loss of so many that have never arrived at all. Mr. Hamilton has not yet come, and perhaps will not of some months. I hear he is at Leghorn. General Graham has been dangerously ill ; but I am told he is now on his return. We have at present the most extra-

large hamper, and sent by a waggon. One may easily guess how this set of company made their journey ; and I have never been able to think of the present compound ministry without the idea of barking, scratching, and screaming. 'Tis too ridiculous a one (I own) for the gravity of their characters, and still more for the situation this kingdom is in ; for as much as one may encourage the love of laughter, 'tis impossible to be indifferent to the interest of the country one lives in."—T.

vagant weather [that] has been known for some years; it is as cold and wet as an English November. Thursday next is the ceremony of the Ascension; the show will be entirely spoilt if the rain continues, to the serious affliction of the fine ladies, who all make new clothes on that occasion. We have had lately two magnificent weddings; Lord Mandeville¹ had the pleasure of dancing at one of them. I appeared at neither, being formal balls, where no masks were admitted, and all people set out in high dress, which I have long renounced, as it is very fit I should; though there were several grandmothers there, who exhibited their jewels. In this country nobody grows old until they are bed-rid.

I wish your daughters to resemble me in nothing but the love of reading, knowing, by experience, how far it is capable of softening the cruelest accidents of life; even the happiest cannot be passed over without many uneasy hours; and there is no remedy so easy as books, which, if they do not give cheerfulness, at least restore quiet to the most troubled mind. Those that fly to cards or company for relief, generally find they only exchange one misfortune for another.

You have so much business on your hands, I will not take you from more proper employment by a long letter. I am, my dear child, with the warmest affection,

Ever your tender mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 13 [1758].

It was with great pleasure I received my dear child's letter of April 15 this day, May 13. Do not imagine that I have had hard thoughts of you when I lamented your silence: I think I know your good heart too well to suspect you of any unkindness to me; in your circumstances many unavoidable accidents may hinder your writing, but having not heard from you for many months, my fears for your health made me very uneasy. I am surprised I am not oftener low-spirited, con-

¹ George Viscount Mandeville, eldest son of Robert Duke of Manchester.—D.

sidering the vexations I am exposed to by the folly of Murray ; I suppose he attributes to me some of the marks of contempt he is treated with ; without remembering that he was in no higher esteem before I came. I confess I have received great civilities from some friends that I made here so long ago as the year '40, but upon my honour have never named his name, or heard him mentioned by any noble Venetian whatever ; nor have in any shape given him the least provocation to all the low malice he has shown me, which I have overlooked as below my notice, and would not trouble you with any part of it at present if he had not invented a new persecution, which may be productive of ill consequences. Here arrived, a few days ago, Sir James Steuart with his lady ;¹ that name was sufficient to make me fly to wait on her. I was charmed to find a man of uncommon sense and learning, and a lady that without beauty is more amiable than the fairest of her sex. I offered them all the little good offices in my power, and invited them to supper ; upon which our wise minister has discovered that I am in the interest of popery and slavery. As he has often said the same thing of Mr. Pitt, it would give me no mortification, if I did not apprehend that his fertile imagination may support this wise idea by such circumstances as may influence those that do not know me. It is very remarkable that after having suffered all the rage of that party at Avignon for my attachment to the present reigning family, I should be accused here of favouring rebellion, when I hoped all our odious divisions were forgotten.

I return you many thanks, my dear child, for your kind intention of sending me another set of books. I am still in your debt nine shillings, and send you enclosed a note on Child to pay for whatever you buy ; but no more duplicates ; as well as I love nonsense, I do not desire to have it twice over in the same words ; no translations ; no periodical papers ; though I confess some of the *World* entertained me very much, particularly Lord Chesterfield and Horry Walpole, whom I knew at Florence ; but whenever I met Dodsley I

¹ See next letter.—T.

wished him out of the World with all my heart.¹ The title was a very lucky one, being as you see productive of puns world without end; which is all the species of wit some people can either practise or understand. I beg you would direct the next box to me, without passing through the hands of Smith;² he makes so much merit of giving himself the trouble of asking for it, that I am quite weary of him; beside that he imposes on me in everything. He has lately married Murray's sister, a beauteous virgin of forty, who after having refused all the peers in England, because the nicety of her conscience would not permit her to give her hand when her heart was untouched, she remained without a husband till the charms of that fine gentleman, Mr. Smith, who is only eighty-two, determined her to change her condition. In short, they are (as Lord Orrery says of Swift and company) an illustrious group, but with that I have nothing to do. I should be sorry to ruin anybody, or offend a man of such strict honour as Lord Holderness, who, like a great politician, has provided for a worthless relation without any expense. It has long been a maxim not to consider if a man is fit for a place, but if the place is fit for him, and we see the fruit of these Machiavellian proceedings. All I desire is, that Mr. Pitt would require of this

¹ The first number of the *World*, an essay paper projected by Edward Moore, the author of the *Gamester*, appeared on the 4th of January, 1753; the last on the 30th of December, 1756. It was published weekly, and numbering among its contributors Horace Walpole, Lord Chesterfield, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, the Earl of Bath, Joseph Warton, and other distinguished names, soon attracted a larger share of attention than the herd of periodical papers of the day. Dodsley, its publisher, is not known to have contributed more than one paper, a fact which will hardly justify Lady Mary's pun. Walpole, in his "Short Notes of My Life," says: "Feb. 8, 1753, was published a paper I had written, in a periodical work called the *World*. . . . I wrote eight more numbers, besides two that were not printed then, and one containing a character of Mr. Fox, which I had written some years before." From the manuscript papers of Dodsley in the British Museum, it appears that Moore agreed to furnish essays at "three guineas each paper," with half property in reprints.—T.

² Joseph Smith, Esq., Consul at Venice. He made a large collection of paintings and gems, which were purchased by King George the Third for 20,000*l*. The *Dactyliothecca Smithiana*, in two vols. quarto, was published in 1765.—D. Horace Walpole says Smith "had a fine library, of which he knew nothing at all but the title-pages;" and Miss Berry relates that he "engaged Canaletti for a certain number of years to paint exclusively for him at a fixed price, and sold his pictures at an advanced price to English travellers." Smith was a widower, having married, first, Mrs. Tofts, the celebrated opera singer, upon whom Pope has an epigram.—T.

noble minister to behave civilly to me, the contrary conduct being very disagreeable.¹ I will talk further on this subject in another letter, if this arrives safely. Let me have an answer as soon as possible, and think of me as

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours, who are very near my heart.

TO SIR JAMES AND LADY FRANCES STEUART.²

[Indorsed by Lady Frances Steuart, "May, 1758, from Venice to Padua,—the first letter after parting with her ladyship and coming to Padua."]

I AM in great pain both for your health and situation, and wish you would permit me to be of any service to you. I know what it is to be without servants in a strange country, and how far people are imposed on that bear the name of English and heretics into the bargain; the folly of British boys, and stupidity or knavery of governors, have gained us the glorious title of Golden Asses all over Italy. I never was in the Padua locanda, but except they are more virtuous than any I ever met with, you will be very ill served, and very well robbed. Here is a fellow recommended to me by Baron Talmua, who says he will answer for his honesty and capacity; he can serve as cook, valet-de-chambre, purveyor, and steward; he speaks no German, but is very willing to follow you, and presumes he shall soon learn it. I think recommending servants almost as dangerous as making matches (which, I thank the Lord, I never engaged in): nothing could oblige me to venture on it but your distress, and the good opinion I have of the probity of Baron Talmua, who is a German man of quality I have known some time, and am much obliged to. He has earnestly pressed me to make you this offer, on hearing me lament the seduction of your woman.

¹ In another letter Lady Mary says that Murray having been asked why he did not behave civilly to her, replied that it was not in his instructions.—T.

² Sir James Steuart, Bart., of Coltness, the political economist. He married in October, 1743, Lady Frances Wemyss, daughter of James fourth Earl of Wemyss, who is the lady here addressed. Sir James joined the cause of the Pretender in 1745, and was, in consequence, compelled to remain abroad for nearly twenty years.—T.

This minute I am shown a letter of my *gastaldi* (in French, *concierge*; I know no proper title for him in English). I can assure you, sir and madam, his *style grossier* gave me more pleasure than ever I received from the points of *Voiture* or the puns of Swift or Pope, since my secretary assured me that it contained an account of your well-being, and having honoured my mansion with your presence; he brags of having done his duty in waiting on the two *milordi*; and that you found the palazzo very clean; and he hopes you took nothing ill, though you refused the *portantina*. In this manner were his hieroglyphics explained to me, which I am forced and pleased to give faith to, as I do to the translators of Hebrew, though I can make nothing of the figures myself. I have read over your book,¹ Sir James, and have a great deal to say about it, though nothing to object; but must refer to another time; having literally six people in the room, according to their laudable custom talking all at once, I hardly know what I say, but I know what I think; that I will get to Padua as fast as I can, to enjoy the best company I ever knew.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, May 29, 1758.

MY DEAR CHILD,—My last letter was wrote in such a fright, I do not remember one word I said; and I presume you could make nothing out of it; I am now restored to my usual calmness of mind, and hope I was more afraid than hurt, being assured (I think from good hands) that my civility to a distressed lady and gentleman can no way be an injury to you, or give any suspicion of my being engaged in an interest that was always foreign both to my principles and inclination. You mention the letter you received from Mr. Law, but say nothing of his pupil, Mr. Oliver, who, if his estate be so large as I am told, may be worthy the regard of my granddaughters, being a generous, good-natured man, and willing to do right whenever he sees it. Mr. Pitt is obliged to

¹ Probably his *Dissertation upon the Doctrine and Principles of Money* applied to the German Coin, published at Tubingen in 1758.—T.

him, having had high words with Murray upon his account. I did not charge him with my letter, suspecting the carelessness incident to youth, though I no way mistrusted his integrity. But as they proposed staying some time in Germany, I did not send my token to you by either of them, expecting many English this Ascension. But, by the political contrivances of our great minister, I have seen few, and those in such a cool way, that I did not think it proper to ask a favour. I mentioned it to Lord Mandeville, and Colonel Otway, who travels with him: they promised to wait on me for it, but left the town suddenly; on which I heard lamented the slavery the young nobility were under to formal governors, and easily guessed the reasons for their departure.

I am afraid you may think some imprudent behaviour of mine has occasioned all this ridiculous persecution; I can assure you I have always treated him and his family with the utmost civility, and am now retired to Padua, to avoid the comments that will certainly be made on his extraordinary conduct towards me. I only desire privacy and quiet, and am very well contented to be without visits, which oftener disturb than amuse me. My single concern is the design he has formed of securing (as he calls it) my effects immediately on my decease; if they ever fall into his hands, I am persuaded they will never arrive entire into yours, which is a very uneasy thought to, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

My blessing to all yours, and compliments to Lord Bute.

TO SIR JAMES AND LADY FRANCES STEUART.

[Indorsed by Lady Frances Steuart, "From Venice or Padua, when we were with her ladyship."]

HERE is predestination in abundance! I am not born to be happy; perhaps nobody can be so without great allays,—all philosophers, ancient and modern, agree in that sentiment. I cannot come to you for reasons I will whisper to Lady Fanny, and I dare not accept your company for fear of affect-

ing Sir James's health, which is more precious to me than to anybody, always excepting sua amabilissima consorte.¹

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[July 4, 1758.]

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am extremely delighted by your letter of May 6th, which I received yesterday, July 3rd. Your pleasure in your daughter's company is exactly what I have felt in yours, and recalls to me many tender ideas, perhaps better forgot. You observe very justly, my affection, which was confined to one, must be still more intense than yours, which is divided among so many. I cannot help being anxious for their future welfare, though thoroughly convinced of the folly of being so. Human prudence is so short-sighted, it is common to see the wisest schemes disappointed, and things often take a more favourable turn than there is any apparent reason to expect. My poor sister Gower, I really think, shortened her life by fretting at the disagreeable prospect of a numerous family, slenderly provided for; yet you see how well fortune has disposed of them. You may be as lucky as Lady Selina Bathurst.² I wish Lady Mary's destiny may lead her to a young gentleman I saw this spring.³ He is son to Judge Hervey, but takes the name of Desbouverie, on inheriting a very large estate from his mother. He will not charm at first sight; but I never saw a young man of better understanding, with the strictest notions of honour and morality, and, in my opinion, a peculiar sweetness of temper. Our acquaintance was short, he being summoned to England on the death of his younger brother. I am persuaded he will

¹ This is clearly said in joke.—W. This initial, when prefixed to the letters to Sir James and Lady Steuart, must be understood as signifying only that they appeared in Lord Wharnccliffe's edition. It is probable that Lord Wharnccliffe found them already affixed to the letters as printed for private circulation.—T.

² Lady Selina Shirley, daughter of Robert Earl Ferrers, wife of Peter Bathurst, Esq., of Clarendon Park, Wilts.—D.

³ The gentleman referred to was the son of John Hervey, of Beachworth, Esq., one of the Welsh Judges, by Anne, eldest daughter of Christopher Desbouverie, by Elizabeth his wife, daughter and sole heir of Ralph Foreman, Esq., of Beachworth, in Surrey. This Christopher was the youngest son of Sir Edward Desbouverie, knighted in 1694, one of the ancestors of the Earl of Radnor.—W.

never marry for money, nor even for beauty. Your daughter's character perfectly answers the description of what he wished for his bride. Our conversation happened on the subject of matrimony, in his last visit, his mind being much perplexed on that subject, supposing his father, who is old and infirm, had sent for him with some view of that sort.

You will laugh at the castles I build in relation to my grandchildren; and will scarcely think it possible those I have never seen should so much employ my thoughts. I can assure you that they are, next to yourself, the objects of my tenderest concern; and it is not from custom, but my heart, when I send them my blessing, and say that I am your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute.

My dear Child,—I am glad you do not know (by dear bought experience) the most despicable enemy can do great mischief,¹ and alas! the most valuable friend little good. Such is human-kind!

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, July 14 [1758].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I hope this will find you in perfect health. I had a letter from your father last post, dated from Newbold, which tells me a very agreeable piece of news, that the contests of parties, so violent formerly (to the utter destruction of peace, civility, and common sense), are so happily terminated, that there is nothing of that sort mentioned in good company. I think I ought to wish you and my grandchildren joy on this general pacification, when I remember all the vexation I have gone through, from my youth upwards, on the account of those divisions, which touched me no more than the disputes between the followers of Mahomet and Ali, being always of opinion that politics and controversy were as unbecoming to our sex as the dress of a prizefighter; and I would as soon have mounted Fig's theatre as have

¹ This probably alludes to her differences with Mr. Murray.—T.

stewed all night in the gallery of a committee, as some ladies of bright parts have done.

Notwithstanding this habitual (I believe I might say natural) indifference, here am I involved in adventures, as surprising as any related in *Amadis de Gaul*, or even by Mr. Glanville.¹

I can assure you I should not be more surprised at seeing myself riding in the air on a broomstick, than in the figure of a first-rate politician. You will stare to hear that your nurse keeps her corner (as Lord Bolingbroke says of Miss Oglethorpe) in this illustrious conspiracy. I really think the best head of the junto is an English washerwoman, who has made her fortune with all parties by her complaisance in changing her religion, which gives her the merit of a new convert; and her charitable disposition of keeping a house of fair reception for the English captains, sailors, &c., that are distressed by long sea voyages (as Sir Samson Legend remarks in *Love for Love*), gains her friends among all public-spirited people: the scenes are so comic, they deserve the pen of a Richardson to do them justice. I begin to be persuaded the surest way of preserving reputation, and having powerful protectors, is being openly lewd and scandalous. I will not be so censorious to take examples from my own sex; but you see Doctor Swift, who set at defiance all decency, truth, or reason, had a crowd of admirers, and at their head the virtuous and ingenious Earl of Orrery, the polite and learned Mr. Greville, with a number of ladies of fine taste and unblemished characters; while the Bishop of Salisbury (Burnet, I mean), the most indulgent parent, the most generous churchman, and the most zealous assertor of the rights and liberties of his country, was all his life defamed and villified, and after his death most barbarously calumniated, for having had the courage to write a history without flattery. I knew him in my very early youth, and his condescension in directing a girl in her studies, is an obligation I can never forget.

A propos of obligations; I hope you remember yours to

¹ In his *History of Witchcraft: Sadducismus Triumphans*, 1681.—W.

Lady Knatchbull. Her only son is here;¹ his father has been dead nine years; he gave me the first news of it (so little do I know of what passes amongst my acquaintance). I made him the bad compliment of receiving him with tears in my eyes, and told him bluntly I was extreme sorry for the loss of so good a friend, without reflecting that it was telling him I was sorry he was in possession of his estate; however, he did not seem offended, but rather pleased at the esteem I expressed for his parents. I endeavoured to repair my blunder by all the civilities in my power, and was very sincere in saying I wished him well, for the sake of his dead and living relations. He appears to me to be what the Duke of Kingston was at Thoresby, though more happy in his guardians and governor. The gentleman who is with him is a man of sense, and I believe has his pupil's interest really at heart; but, there is so much pains taken to make him despise instruction, I fear he will not long resist allurements of pleasures which his constitution cannot support.

Here is great joy on the nomination of Mr. Mackenzie for Turin; his friends hoping to see him on his journey. My token for you lies dormant, and is likely so to do some time. None of the English have visited me (excepting Sir W.), or in so cold a way that it would be highly improper to ask favours of them. He is going to Rome; and it may be, I may be obliged to wait till he returns, next Ascension, before I have an opportunity of conveying it. Such is the behaviour of my loving countrymen!—in recompense I meet with much friendship amongst the noble Venetians, perhaps the more from being no favourite of the man they dislike. It is the peculiar glory of Mr. Mackenzie that the whole Sardinian court rejoice in the expectation of his arrival, notwithstanding they have been very well pleased with Lord Bristol. To say truth, they are the only young men I have seen abroad that have found the secret of introducing themselves into the best company. All the others now living [here] (however dignified

¹ Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, of Mersham-Hatch, in Kent, succeeded his father in 1749. His mother was Catharine, daughter of James Harris, of Salisbury.—D.

and distinguished), by herding together, and throwing away their money on worthless objects, have only acquired the glorious title of Golden Asses; and, since the birth of the Italian drama, Goldoni has adorned his scenes with *gli milordi Inglesi*, in the same manner as Molière represented his Parisian marquises. If your agreeable brother-in-law is still at London, I desire you would wish him joy in my name. If it be no trouble to him, you may take that occasion of sending me some books, particularly two small volumes lately wrote by Mr. Horace Walpole.¹ My dear child, I ask your pardon for the intolerable length of this trifling letter. You know age is tattling, and something should be forgiven to the sincere affection with which I am ever,

Your most affectionate mother.

Do not tell your father these foolish squabbles. It is the only thing I would keep from his knowledge. I am apprehensive he should imagine some misplaced raillery or vivacity of mine has drawn on me these ridiculous persecutions. 'Tis really incredible they should be carried to such a height without the least provocation.

My best compliments to Lord Bute. I think myself much obliged to him, and shall not forget it. My blessing to all my grandchildren. I would have sent my packet to Mr. Hervey, if I could have foreseen that I should not be visited by any other. I do not doubt Sir Wyndham Knatchbull would accept of the care of it; but he is making the tour to Rome and Naples, and does not intend for England till next spring.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, July 29 [1758].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am sure you laugh at my philosophy. I own I dare make no more pretences to it after appearing so much heated on a subject that (I agree with you) ought to seem a trifle: but the idea of injuring you or offending your father by any part of my conduct, is so sensible a pain it puts

¹ His Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England.—T.

an end to all the stoicism that time and reflection have furnished me with. I will talk no more of things disagreeable.

I am glad to hear Lady Betty Mackenzie is so amiable. I have dined with her at the D. [Duke] of Argyll's, and seen her several times, but she was then of an age when young ladies think silence becoming in the presence of their parents. Lady Mary,¹ hardly past her childhood, was more free, and I confess was my favourite in the family. The rejoicing in this town for the election of the Pope,² who was archbishop of this city, is not yet over, and have been magnificent to the last degree; the illuminations, fireworks, and assemblies, have been finer than any known of many years. I have had no share in them, going to bed at the hour they begun. It is remarkable the present Pope³ has his mother yet living at Venice; his father died only last winter. If he follows the steps of his predecessor, he will be a great blessing to his dominions. I could, with pleasure to myself, enlarge on the character of the deceased prelate, which was as extraordinary as that of the Czar Peter, being equally superior to the prejudices of education, but you would think me bribed by the civilities I received from him. I had the honour of a most obliging message by his particular order, the post before that which brought the news of his death.

I am not surprised you are not much delighted with Lady Irwin's conversation; yet, on the whole, I think her better than many other women; I am persuaded there is no blackness in her heart. Lord Carlisle was the most intimate friend of my father, they were near of the same age, and, if he had not been dedicated to retirement, would have been one of [the] D. of K.'s [Duke of Kingston's] guardians; and I firmly believe would have acted in a different manner from those who were entrusted, being (with all his failings) a man of great honour. I was early acquainted with his daughters, and, giving way to the vanity and false pretensions of Lady Irwin,

¹ Lady Mary Coke.—D.

² Upon the death of Cardinal Lambertini, Benedict XIV.—D.

³ Cardinal Rezzonico, Bishop of Padua, was elected Pope in July, 1758. He adopted the title of Clement XIII. Rezzonico was a Venetian.—T.

always lived well with her. It was possible to laugh at her, but impossible to be angry with her. I never saw any malice in her composition. A court life may have altered her; but when I saw her last (a few weeks before I left London), she was the same as I knew her at Castle-Howard. I tire you with these old wives' tales, and will put an end to my dull epistle by the sincere assurance of my being

Ever your affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

I wish you would mention the dates of your letters. I think I have received but one of three that you tell me you have wrote.

I hope Mr. Mackenzie intends to pass by Venice.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, Aug. 21 [1758].

I AM much obliged to you, my dear child, for the concern you express for me in yours of July 10th, which I received yesterday, August 20th, but I can assure you I lose very little in not being visited by the English; boys and governors being commonly (not always) the worst company in the world. I am no otherways affected by it, than as it has an ill appearance in a strange country, though hitherto I have not found any bad effect from it among my Venetian acquaintance. I was visited, two days ago, by my good friend Cavalier Antonio Mocenigo, who came from Venice to present to me the elected husband of his brother's great granddaughter, who is a noble Venetian (Signor Zeno), just of age, heir to a large fortune, and is one of the most agreeable figures I ever saw; not beautiful, but has an air of so much modesty and good sense, I could easily believe all the good Signor Antonio said of him. They came to invite me to the wedding. I could not refuse such a distinction, but hope to find some excuse before the solemnity, being unwilling to throw away money on fine clothes, which are as improper for me as an embroidered pall for a coffin. But I durst not mention age before my friend, who told me he is eighty-six. I thought him four years

younger; he has all his senses perfect, and is as lively as a man of thirty. It was very pleasing to see the affectionate respect of the young man, and the fond joy that the old one took in praising him. They would have persuaded me to return with them to Venice; I objected that my house was not ready to receive me; Signor Antonio laughed, and asked me, if I did not think he could give me an apartment (in truth it was very easy, having five palaces in a row, on the great canal, his own being the centre, and the others inhabited by his relations). I was reduced to tell a fib (God forgive me!), and pretend a pain in my head; promising to come to Venice before the marriage, which I really intend. They dined here; your health was the first drunk; you may imagine I did not fail to toast the bride. She is yet in a convent, but is to be immediately released, and receive visits of congratulation on the contract, till the celebration of the church ceremony, which perhaps may not be this two months; during which time the lover makes a daily visit, and never comes without a present, which custom (at least sometimes) adds to the impatience of the bridegroom, and very much qualifies that of the lady. You would find it hard to believe a relation of the magnificence, not to say extravagance, on these occasions; indeed it is the only one they are guilty of, their lives in general being spent in a regular handsome economy; the weddings and the creation of a procurator being the only occasions they have of displaying their wealth, which is very great in many houses, particularly this of Mocenigo, of which my friend is the present head. I may justly call him so, giving me proofs of an attachment quite uncommon at London, and certainly disinterested, since I can no way possibly be of use to him. I could tell you some strong instances of it, if I did not remember you have not time to listen to my stories, and there is scarce room on my paper to assure you I am, my dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

Compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

[Indorsed, "Padua, September 7th, 1758; the first letter after leaving her at Padua to go back to Tubingen."]

Padua, Sept. 4, San Massimo.¹

MY DEAR LADY FANNY,—I have been some time in pain for your silence, and at last begun to fear that either some accident had befallen you, or you had been so surfeited with my dulness at Padua, you resolved not to be plagued with it when at a distance. These melancholy ideas growing strong upon me, I wrote to Mr. Duff to inquire after your health. I have received his answer this morning; he tells me you are both well and safely arrived at Tubingen; and I take the liberty to put you in mind of one that can never forget you and the cheerful hours we have passed together. The weather favoured you according to your prayers; since that time we have had storms, tempests, pestilential blasts, and at this moment such suffocating heat, the doctor is sick in bed, and nobody in health in my family, excepting myself and my Swiss servants, who support our constitutions by hearty eating and drinking, while the poor Italians are languishing on their salads and lemonade. I confess I am in high spirits, having succeeded in my endeavour to get a promise of assisting some very worthy people whom I am fond of. You know I am enthusiastic in my friendships. I also hear from all hands of my daughter's prosperity; you, madam, that are a mother, may judge of my pleasure in her happiness: though I have no taste for that sort of felicity. I could never endure with tolerable patience the austerities of a court life. I was saying every day from my heart (while I was condemned to it), "the things that I would do, those I do not, and the things I would not do, those do I daily," and I had rather be a sister of St. Clara than lady of the bedchamber to any queen in Europe. It is not age and disappointment that has given me

¹ San Massimo was the name of the house which Lady Mary had taken at Padua.—T.

these sentiments; you may see them in a copy of verses¹ sent from Constantinople in my early youth to my uncle Fielding, and by his (well intended) indiscretion shown about, copies taken, and at length miserably printed. I own myself such a rake, I prefer liberty to chains of diamonds, and when I hold my peace (like K. David) it is pain and grief to me.

No fraud the poet's sacred breast can bear,
Mild are our manners, and our hearts sincere.
Rude and unpolished in the courtier's school,
I loathe a knave, and tremble at a fool.

With this rusticity of manners I do not wonder to see my company avoided by all great men and fine ladies. I could tell your ladyship such a history of my calamities since we parted, you will be surprised to hear I have not despaired and died like the sick lion in Æsop's fables, who so pathetically cries out—*Bis videor mori*, when he was kicked by a certain animal I will not name, because it is very like a *paw* word.
Vale!

I desire this letter (innocent as it is) may be burnt. All my works are consecrated to the fire for fear of being put to more ignoble uses, as their betters have been before them. I beg an immediate answer.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

[Indorsed, "Sept. 5, 1758; the 2nd to Tubingen from Padua."]

SIR,—On the information of Mr. Duff that you had certainly wrote though I had not been so happy to receive your letter, I thought (God forgive the vanity!) that perhaps I was important enough to have my letters stopped, and immediately sent you a long scrawl without head or tail, which, I am afraid, is scarce intelligible, if ever it arrives.

This day, Sept. 5th, I have had the pleasure of a most agreeable and obliging mark of your remembrance; but as it has no date, I neither know when nor from whence it was written.

I am extremely sorry for dear Lady Fanny's disorder. I

¹ See poems.—T.

could repeat to her many wise sayings of ancients and moderns, which would be of as much service to her as a present of embroidered slippers to you when you have a fit of the gout. I have seen so much of hysterical complaints—though Heaven be praised I never felt them—I know it is an obstinate and very uneasy distemper, though never fatal, unless when quacks undertake to cure it. I have even observed that those who are troubled with it commonly live to old age. Lady Stair¹ is one instance; I remember her screaming and crying when Miss Primrose, myself, and other girls were dancing two rooms distant. Lady Fanny has but a slight touch of this distemper: read Dr. Sydenham, you will find the analysis of that and many other diseases, with a candour I never found in any other author. I confess I never had faith in any other physician, living or dead. Mr. Locke places him in the same rank with Sir Isaac Newton, and the Italians call him the English Hippocrates. I own I am charmed with his taking off the reproach which you men so saucily throw on our sex, as if we alone were subject to vapours: he clearly proves that your wise, honourable spleen is the same disorder and arises from the same cause; but you vile usurpers do not only engross learning, power, and authority to yourselves, but will be our superiors even in constitution of mind, and fancy you are incapable of the woman's weakness of fear and tenderness. Ignorance! I could produce such examples—

Show me that man of wit in all your roll,
Whom some one woman has not made a fool.

I beg your pardon for these verses, but I have a right to scribble all that comes at my pen's end, being in high spirits on an occasion more interesting to me than the election of popes or emperors. His present Holiness is not much my acquaintance, but his family have been so since my first arrival at Venice, 1740. His father died only last winter, and was a very agreeable worthy man, killed by a doctor; his mother

¹ Lady Eleanor Campbell, daughter of James Earl of London. She married, first, James Viscount Primrose, and secondly, John second Earl of Stair, the celebrated general and ambassador. She died in 1759.—T.

rather suffered life than enjoyed it after the death of her husband, and was little sensible of the advancement of her son, though I believe it made a greater impression on her than appeared, and, it may be, hastened her death; which happened a fortnight after his elevation, in the midst of the extraordinary rejoicings at Venice on that occasion. The honours bestowed on his brother, the balls, festivals, &c., are they not written in the daily books called newspapers?

I resisted all invitations, and am still at Padua, where reading, writing, riding, and walking find me full employment.

I accept the compliments of the fine young gentleman with the joy of an old woman who does not expect to be taken notice of: pray don't tell him I am an old woman. He shall be my toast from this forward, and (provided he never sees me as long as he lives) I may be his. *A propos* of toasting, upon my honour I have not tasted a drop of punch since we parted; I cannot bear the sight of it; it would recal too tender ideas, and I should be quarrelling with Fortune for our separation, when I ought to thank her divinity for having brought us together. I could tell a long story of princes and potentates, but I am so little versed in state affairs I will not so much as answer your ensnaring question concerning the Jesuits, which is meddling at once with church and state.

This letter is of a horrible length, and, what is worse (if any worse can be), such a rhapsody of nonsense, as may kill poor Lady Fanny now she is low-spirited, though I am persuaded she has good nature enough to be glad to hear I am happy: which I could not be, if I had not a view of seeing my friends so. As to you, sir, I make no excuses; you are bound to have indulgence for me, as for a sister of the quill. I have heard Mr. Addison say he always listened to poets with patience, to keep up the dignity of the fraternity. Let me have an answer as soon as possible. *Si vales, bene est: valeo.*

P.S. Do not be offended at the word poet, it slipped out unawares. I know you scorn it, though it has been dignified by Lord Somers, Lord Godolphin, and Dr. Atterbury.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, Sept. 5 [1758].

I WROTE to you very lately, my dear child, in answer to that letter Mr. Hamilton brought me: he was so obliging to come on purpose from Venice to deliver it, as I believe I told you; but I am so highly delighted with this, dated August 4, giving an account of your little colony, I cannot help setting pen to paper, to tell you the melancholy joy I had in reading it. You would have laughed to see the old fool weep over it. I now find that age, when it does not harden the heart and sour the temper, naturally returns to the milky disposition of infancy. Time has the same effect on the mind as on the face. The predominant passion, the strongest feature, become more conspicuous from the others retiring; the various views of life are abandoned, from want of ability to pursue them, as the fine complexion is lost in wrinkles; but, as surely as a large nose grows larger, and a wide mouth wider, the tender child in your nursery will be a tender old woman, though, perhaps, reason may have restrained the appearance of it, till the mind, relaxed, is no longer capable of concealing its weakness; for weakness it is to indulge any attachment at a period of life when we are sure to part with life itself, at a very short warning. According to the good English proverb, young people may die, but old must. You see I am very industrious in finding comfort to myself in my exile, and to guard, as long as I can, against the peevishness which makes age miserable in itself and contemptible to others. 'Tis surprising to me, that, with the most inoffensive conduct, I should meet enemies, when I cannot be envied for anything, and have pretensions to nothing.

Is it possible the old Colonel Duncombe¹ I knew should be Lord Feversham, and married to a young wife? As to Lord Ranelagh, I confess it must be a very bitter draught to submit

¹ Anthony Duncombe, created Lord Feversham, 1747; which title became extinct in 1763, on his dying without male issue. He was the nephew of Sir Charles Duncombe, Lord Mayor of London, 1709.—W.

to take his name, but his lady¹ has had a short purgatory, and now enjoys affluence with a man she likes, and who I am told is a man of merit, which I suppose she thinks preferable to Lady Selina's nursery. Here are no old people in this country, neither in dress or gallantry. I know only my friend Antonio, who is true to the memory of his adored lady: her picture is always in his sight, and he talks of her in the style of *pastor fido*. I believe I owe his favour to having shown him her miniature, by Rosalba, which I bought at London: perhaps you remember it in my little collection: he is really a man of worth and sense. Hearing it reported, I need not say by whom, that my retirement was owing to having lost all my money at play at Avignon, he sent privately for my chief servant, and desired him to tell him naturally if I was in any distress; and not only offered, but pressed, him to lay three thousand sequins on my toilet. I don't believe I could borrow that sum, without good security, among my great relations. I thank God I had no occasion to make use of this generosity; but I am sure you will agree with me, that I ought never to forget the obligation. I could give some other instances in which he has shown his friendship, in protecting me from mortifications, invented by those that ought to have assisted me; but 'tis a long, tiresome story. You will be surprised to hear the general does not yet know these circumstances; he arrived at Venice but few days before I left it; and promising me to come to Padua, at the fair, I thought I should have time sufficient to tell him my history. Indeed, I was in hopes he would have accepted my invitation of lodging in my house; but his multiplicity of affairs hindered him from coming at all, and 'tis only a few days since that he made me a visit, in company with Mr. Hamilton, before whom I did not think it proper to speak my complaints. They are now gone to drink the waters at Vicenza: when they return, I intend moving to Venice, and then shall relate my grievances,

¹ Selina, eldest daughter of Peter Bathurst, Esq., by the Lady Selina Shirley. She married, first, in 1748, Arthur Cole Lord Ranelagh, of the kingdom of Ireland, who died October 5, 1754; and secondly, on the 13th of November, 1755, Sir John Elwill, Bart.—T.

which I have more reason to do than ever. I have tired you with this disagreeable subject: I will release you, and please myself in repeating the assurance of my being ever, while I have a being, your most affectionate mother.

My dear child, do not think of reversing nature by making me presents. I would send you all my jewels and my toilet, if I knew how to convey them, though they are in some measure necessary in this country, where it would be, perhaps, reported I had pawned them, if they did not sometimes make their appearance. I know not how to send commissions for things I never saw; nothing of price I would have, as I would not new furnish an inn I was on the point of leaving; such is this world to me. Though china is in such high estimation here, I have sometimes an inclination to desire your father to send me the two large jars that stood in the windows in Cavendish-square. I am sure he don't value them, and believe they would be of no use to you. I bought them at an auction, for two guineas, before the D. of Argyll's example had made all china, more or less, fashionable.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to our dear children.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Padua, Sept. 16 [1758].

I AM informed that your health and sight are perfectly good, which gives me courage to trouble you with a letter of congratulation on a blessing that is equal to us both: I mean the great and good character I hear from everybody of Lord Bute. It is a satisfaction I never hoped, to have a son that does honour to his family. I am persuaded you are of my opinion, and had rather be related to him than to any silly duke in Christendom. Indeed, money (however considerable the sum) in the hands of a fool is as useless as if presented to a monkey, and will as surely be scattered in the street. I need not quote examples. My daughter is also generally esteemed, and I cannot help communicating to you the pleasure I receive whenever I hear her commended. I am afraid my letter is

too long. This subject runs away with me. I wish you many years' continuance of the health and spirits I am told you now enjoy.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Oct. 1, N.S. [1758].

I HAVE wrote five letters to my dear child, of which you have not acknowledged the receipt. I fear some, if not all of them, have miscarried, which may be attributed to Sir J. Gray's leaving Venice. You must now direct, alas! "Recommandé à Mon^r Smith, Consul de S. M. B."

The first of those letters I mention spoke of Lord K.; the second had a story of L. [Lady] O.; the third answered yours relating to Miss Gunnings; the fourth gave an account of our cardinal; and the last enclosed a note upon Child. You need not excuse to me taking notice of your carpet. I think you have great reason to value yourself on the performance, but will have better luck than I have had, if you can persuade anybody else to do so. I could never get people to believe that I set a stitch, when I worked six hours in a day. You will confess my employments much more trifling than yours, when I own to you (between you and I) that my chief amusement is writing the history of my own time. It has been my fortune to have a more exact knowledge both of the persons and facts that have made the greatest figure in England in this age, than is common; and I take pleasure in putting together what I know, with an impartiality that is altogether unusual. Distance of time and place has totally blotted from my mind all traces either of resentment or prejudice; and I speak with the same indifference of the court of G. B. as I should do of that of Augustus Cæsar. I hope you have not so ill opinion of me to think I am turning author in my old age. I can assure you I regularly burn every quire as soon as it is finished; and mean nothing more than to divert my solitary hours. I know mankind too well to think they are capable of receiving truth, much less of applauding it: or, were it otherwise, applause to me is as insignificant as gar-

lands on the dead. I have no concern beyond my own family ; but your father's silence gives me great pain. I have not heard from him since last April. Let me know the reason of it, and write as often as you can to your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Oct. 3 [1758].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am under a sort of necessity of troubling you with an impertinent letter. Three fine ladies (I should say four, including the Signora Madre) set out for London a few days ago. As they have no acquaintance there, I think it very possible (knowing their assurance) that some of them may try to make some by visiting you, perhaps in my name. Upon my word I never saw them except in public and at the resident's, who, being one of their numerous passionate admirers, obliged his wife to receive them. The father's name was Wynn. Some say he had 1200*l.* per annum, others 2000*l.* He came several years since to Venice to dissipate his affliction for the loss of his lady. He was introduced by his Gondolier (who are as industrious as the drawers at London) to this Greek, who I believe was then remarkably handsome, having still great remains of beauty. He liked her well enough to take her into keeping, and had three daughters by her, before her artifices prevailed on him to marry her. Since that she produced two boys. Mr. W. died here, leaving all his children infants. He left the girls 1500*l.* each. The mother carried them all to England, I suppose being told it was necessary to prove her marriage. She stayed there one year, but being tired of the place, where she knew nobody, nor one word of the language, she returned hither, where she has flourished exceedingly, and receives the homage of all the young fellows in the town, strangers and natives. They kept a constant assembly, but had no female visitors of any distinction. The eldest daughter speaks English. I have said enough of them to hinder your being deceived by them, but should have said

much more, if you had been at Caenwood, in full leisure to read novels. The story deserves the pen of my dear Smollett, who, I am sorry, disgraces his talent by writing those stupid romances commonly called history. Shebbeare does yet worse,¹ and dabbles in filthy politics, instead of making more *Lydias* for my entertainment. Lord Brudenell has been here a fortnight, and been several times to see me. He has a general good character, and some resemblance of [the Duchess of] Montagu.

I am sorry your father has parted with Twickenham. I am afraid 'tis with an intention of passing much of his time at a distance from London. I wish, both for his sake and yours, he was often with you.

General Graham and Colonel Hamilton (who always toasts Lady Anne Stuart) dined with me yesterday. I am ever, my dearest child, your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

[Indorsed, "From Venice, Oct. 5th."] [1758.]

I AM exceedingly delighted, my dear Lady Fanny, to hear of the recovery of your health and spirits: if my prayers or endeavours prevail, you will never have anything to displease you; 'tis the height of my ambition to serve my friends, and their number is so very small, I may hope to succeed without aiming at any great degree of power. My daughter shall be informed of your favourable opinion; she has already all the esteem for your ladyship that your merit exacts from all that know you. Alas, madam! you talk at your ease of two or three years hence; I hardly extend my views to so many weeks, and cannot flatter myself with the hope of seeing you

¹ Shebbeare was prosecuted for writing a political pamphlet called *Letters to the People of England* in 1759, and found guilty. When in the pillory at Charing-cross, a footman stood beside him holding an umbrella over him. Having caused handbills to be circulated among the populace inviting them to see the British champion of liberty of the press in the pillory, he was received by the people with loud cheers. The under-sheriff was subsequently punished for having allowed him to stand upon, instead of in, the pillory.—T.

again : I have not your satisfaction less at heart, and am persuaded that I shall be [have?] succeeded in my desire to serve you when I shall no longer be capable of giving thanks for it. I am very sorry for Lord Garlies's loss of his brother;¹ and heartily wish seven or eight more might arise from his ashes.

The magnificent rejoicings for the Pope's elevation are not yet over : there was last night very fine fireworks before the Palace Rezzonico : I suppose the newspapers have given an account of the regatta, &c. You may be sure I have very little share in the night diversions, which generally begin at the hour I undress for bed. Here are few English this carnival, and those few extremely engaged in parties of pleasure, which, ten to one, they will never forget to their dying day.—Permit me, dear madam, to address myself to Sir James. I can assure you, sir, I am sincerely grieved at the return of your disorder. You would think me too interested if I recommended a warm climate. I confess self-love will mix even imperceptibly in all our sentiments, yet I verily believe a northern air cannot be good either for you or Lord Marischal.² I am very much obliged to him for remembering a useless friend and servant : my good wishes, with a grateful sense of his civilities, always attend him. I expect with impatience the present you have promised me ; it would have been always agreeable, but is particularly so now, when I am in a great town almost as solitary as in a desert. All my pleasures are recollections of those past ; there are (I think) some refined metaphysicians that assert they are the only realities. I agree they are highly pleasing, with a dash of hope to enliven them ; but in my melancholy case, when all my prospects are as bounded as those from a window against a dead wall—I will not go on in this dismal strain. I wish the post would suffer me to entertain you with some ridiculous farces exhibited by my loving countrymen ; even that is denied me from prudential considerations. Nothing

¹ The Honourable George Stewart, son of the sixth Earl of Galloway, was killed at Ticonderago in 1758.—W.

² George tenth Earl Marischal, born in 1693, served under the Great Frederic, and died at Potsdam, May 28, 1778.—W.

can hinder my being to my last moment faithfully attached to Lady Frances and yourself.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Venice, Oct. 13, 1759¹ [1758].

YOU have made (what I did not think possible) writing to you uneasy to me. After confessing that you barbarously criticise on my letters, I have much ado to summon up courage enough to set pen to paper. Can you answer this to your conscience, to sit gravely and maliciously to examine lines written with rapidity and sent without reading over? This is worse than surprising a fine lady just sat down to the toilet: I am content to let you see my mind undressed, but I will not have you so curiously remark the defects in it. To carry on the simile, when a beauty appears with all her graces and airs adorned for a ball, it is lawful to censure whatever you see amiss in her ornaments; but when you are received to a friendly breakfast, 'tis downright cruelty or (something worse) ingratitude to view too nicely all the disorder you may see. I desire you would sink the critic in the friend, and never forget that I do not write to you and dear Lady Fanny from my head but from my heart. I wish her joy on the continuance of her taste for punch, but I am sure she will agree with me that the zest of good company is very necessary to give it a flavour: to her it is a vivifying nectar, to me it would be insipid river-water, and chill the spirits it should raise, by reflecting on the cheerful moments we once passed together, which can no more return. This thought is so very disagreeable, I will put it as far from me as possible. My chief study all my life has been to lighten misfortunes, and multiply pleasures, as far as human nature can: when I have nothing to find in myself from which I can extract any kind of delight, I think on the happiness of my friends, and rejoice in the joy with which you converse together, and look on the beautiful young plant from which you may so reasonably expect honour

¹ The year appears to have been affixed to some of the letters to Sir J. and Lady F. Steuart conjecturally. In this and other instances I have ventured to transpose them.—T.

and felicity. In other days I think over the comic scenes that are daily exhibited on the great stage of the world for my entertainment. I am charmed with the account of the Moravians, who certainly exceed all mankind in absurdity of principles and madness of practice; yet these people walk erect, and are numbered amongst rational beings. I imagined after three thousand years' working at creeds and theological whimsies, there remained nothing new to be invented; I see the fund is inexhaustible, and we may say of folly what Horace has said of vice:

“Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniam vitiosiore.”

I will not ask pardon for this quotation; it is God's mercy I did not put it into English: when one is haunted (as I am) by the Demon of Poesie, it must come out in one shape or another, and you will own that nobody shows it to more advantage than the author I have mentioned. Adieu, sir. Read with candour; forgive what you can't excuse, in favour of the real esteem and affection with which I am Lady Fanny's and your most humble servant.

Permit my compliments to Mr. Steuart.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Oct. 31, 1758.]

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of Oct. 2nd this day, the 31st instant. The death of the two great ladies you mention, I believe does not occasion much sorrow; they have long been burthens (not to say nuisances) on the face of the earth. I am sorry for Lord Carlisle.¹ He was my friend as well as acquaintance, and a man of uncommon probity and good nature. I think he has showed it by the disposition of his will in the favour of a lady he had no reason to esteem. It is certainly the kindest thing he could do for her, to endeavour to save her from her own folly, which would have probably precipitately hurried her into a second marriage, which would most surely have revenged all her misdemeanors.

¹ He died September 4, 1758.—D.

I was well acquainted with Mr. Walpole at Florence, and indeed he was particularly civil to me. I have great encouragement to ask a favour of him, if I did not know that few people have so good memories to remember so many years backwards as have passed since I have seen him. If he has treated the character of Queen Elizabeth with disrespect, all the women should tear him to pieces, for abusing the glory of their sex.¹ Neither is it just to put her in the list of authors, having never published anything, though we have Mr. Camden's authority that she wrote many valuable pieces, chiefly Greek translations. I wish all monarchs would bestow their leisure hours on such studies: perhaps they would not be very useful to mankind; but it may be asserted, for a certain truth, their own minds would be more improved than by the amusements of Quadrille or Cavagnole.

I desire you would thank your father for the china jars; if they arrive safe, they will do me great honour in this country. The Patriarch died here a few days ago. He had a large temporal estate; and, by long life and extreme parsimony, has left four hundred thousand sequins in his coffers, which is inherited by two nephews; and I suppose will be dissipated as scandalously as it has been accumulated. The town is at present full of factions, for the election of his successor: the ladies are always very active on these occasions. I have observed that they ever have more influence in republics than [in a] monarchy. 'Tis true, a king has often a powerful mistress, but she is governed by some male favourite. In commonwealths, votes are easily acquired by the fair; and she, who has most beauty or art, has a great sway in the senate. I run on troubling you with stories very insignificant to you, and taking up your time, which I am sensible is fully employed in matters of more importance than my old wives' tales. My dear child, God bless you and yours. I am, with the warmest sentiments of my heart, your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to my grandchildren.

¹ Alluding to the character of Queen Elizabeth, in his *Royal and Noble Authors*.—D.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Nov. 8 [1758].

MY DEAR CHILD,—You are extremely good to take so much care of my trifling commissions in the midst of so many important occupations. You judged very right on the subject of Mr. W. [Horace Walpole]. I saw him often both at Florence and Genoa, and you may believe I know him. I am not surprised at the character of poor Ch. Fielding's son.¹ The epithet of *fair* and *foolish* belonged to the whole family; and, as he was over persuaded to marry an ugly woman, I suppose his offspring may have lost the beauty, and retained the folly in full bloom. Colonel Otway, younger brother to Lady Bridget's² spouse, came hither with Lord Mandeville; he told me that she has a daughter with the perfect figure of Lady Winchilsea. I wish she may meet with as good friends as I was to her aunt; but I won't trouble you with old stories. I have, indeed, my head so full of one new one, that I hardly know what I say: I am advised to tell it you, though I had resolved not to do it. I leave it to your prudence to act as you think proper; commonly speaking, silence and neglect is the best answer to defamation, but this is a case so peculiar, that I am persuaded it never happened to any one but myself.

Some few months before Lord W. Hamilton married,³ there appeared a foolish song, said to be wrote by a poetical great lady, who I really think was the character of Lady Arabella, in the *Female Quixote* (without the beauty): you may imagine such a conduct, at court, made her superlatively ridiculous. Lady Delawarr,⁴ a woman of great merit, with whom I lived in much intimacy, showed this fine performance

¹ Charles Fielding was the third son of Basil fourth Earl of Denbigh. He married Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Palmer, of Wingham, in Kent, Bart., widow of Sir Brook Brydges, Bart.—W.

² Lady Bridget was second daughter of Basil fourth Earl of Denbigh; married to James Otway, Esq., of the county of Kent.—W.

³ Second son of James fourth Duke of Hamilton, and the first husband of the notorious Lady Vane.—T.

⁴ Probably Margaret, daughter and heir of John Freeman, of the city of London, merchant, wife of John the sixth Lord Delawarr, and mother of John the first earl; she died in 1738.—W.

to me; we were very merry in supposing what answer Lord William would make to these passionate addresses; she begged me to say something for a poor man, who had nothing to say for himself. I wrote, *extempore*, on the back of the song, some stanzas that went perfectly well to the tune. She promised they should never appear as mine, and faithfully kept her word. By what accident they have fallen into the hands of that thing Dodsley, I know not, but he has printed them as addressed, by me, to a very contemptible puppy, and my own words as his answer.¹ I do not believe either Job or Socrates ever had such a provocation. You will tell me, it cannot hurt me with any acquaintance I ever had: it is true; but it is an excellent piece of scandal for the same sort of people that propagate, with success, that your nurse left her estate, husband, and family, to go with me to England; and, then I turned her to starve, after defrauding her of God knows what. I thank God witches are out of fashion, or I should expect to have it deposed, by several credible witnesses, that I had been seen flying through the air on a broomstick, &c.

I am really sick with vexation, but ever your most affectionate mother.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

[Indorsed by Lady Frances Steuart, "Venice, where we made acquaintance with her ladyship."]

[Nov. 14, 1758.]

THIS letter will be solely to you, and I desire you will not communicate it to Lady Fanny: she is the best woman in the world, and I would by no means make her uneasy; but there will be such strange things in it that the Talmud or the Revelations are not half so mysterious: what these prodigies portend, God knows; but I never should have suspected half the wonders I see before my eyes, and am convinced of the neces-

¹ Dodsley's Collection of Poems was published in three volumes in 1748. The fourth volume appeared in 1749, and the fifth and sixth in 1756. In the sixth volume, p. 230, the dialogue (if it may be so called) between Sir William Yonge and Lady Mary is printed, and very erroneously applied.—D.

sity of the repeal of the witch act (as it is commonly called), I mean, to speak correctly, the tacit permission given to witches, so scandalous to all good Christians: though I tremble to think of it for my own interests. It is certain the British islands have always been strangely addicted to this diabolical intercourse, of which I dare swear you know many instances; but since this public encouragement given to it, I am afraid there will not be an old woman in the nation entirely free from suspicion. The devil rages more powerfully than ever: you will believe me, when I assure you the great and learned English minister is turned methodist, several duels have been fought in the Place of St. Marc for the charms of his excellent lady, and I have been seen flying in the air in the figure of Julian Cox,¹ whose history is related with so much candour and truth by the pious pen of Joseph Glanville, chaplain to K. Charles. I know you young rakes make a jest of all those things, but I think no good lady can doubt of a relation so well attested. She was about seventy years old (very near my age), and the whole sworn to before Judge Archer, 1663: very well worth reading, but rather too long for a letter. You know (wretch that I am) 'tis one of my wicked maxims to make the best of a bad bargain; and I have said publicly that every period of life has its privileges, and that even the most despicable creatures alive may find some pleasures. Now observe this comment; who are the most despicable creatures? Certainly, old women. What pleasure can an old woman take? Only witchcraft. I think this argument as clear as any of the devout Bishop of Cloyne's metaphysics: this being decided in a full congregation of saints, only such atheists as you and Lady Fanny can deny it. I own all the facts, as many witches have done before me, and go every night in a public manner astride upon a black cat to a meeting where you are suspected to appear: this last article is not sworn to, it being doubtful in what manner our clan-

¹ In one of her letters to Lady Bute she dwells on the same idea. [See previous letter.] All this must allude in some way to her quarrel with Mr. Murray, the resident, and to the reports which she accused him of spreading concerning her.—W.

destine midnight correspondence is carried on. Some think it treasonable, others lewd (don't tell Lady Fanny); but all agree there was something very odd and unaccountable in such sudden likings. I confess, as I said before, it is witchcraft. You won't wonder I do not sign (notwithstanding all my impudence) such dangerous truths: who knows the consequence? The devil is said to desert his votaries.

P.S. Fribourg,¹ who you inquire after so kindly, is turned *beau garçon*, and actually kept by the finest lady in Venice; Doctor Moxo² robs on the highway, and Antonio sings at the opera. Would you desire better witchcraft? This to be continued.

Nota bene. You have dispossessed me of the real devils who haunted me. I mean the nine Muses.³

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

[Indorsed, "4th letter from Venice to Tubingen."]

Nov. 27, 1759 [1758].

I FLATTER myself my last rhapsody has revenged me of all your criticisms and railleries (however finely spread). I defy you to decipher the true meaning, yet it is truth at the bottom; but not to teaze you too much with the marvellous adventures of a town with which you are yet little acquainted, and perhaps not very curious to examine, at least that part of it called—*Gli forestieri e ministri dei Grandi—Basti*. I read the news of the D. of Marlbro's death with all the sentiments of a true Briton touched with the misfortunes of his country.⁴ I

¹ Fribourg was a nickname of a servant of Lady Mary's, whose proper name appears to have been Jean François Gremaud.—T.

² Probably a mistake for Mora. Doctor Julio Bartolomeo Mora seems to have been employed by Lady Mary as an amanuensis while in Italy, and he accompanied her to England. He was probably the "secretary" to whom Horace Walpole alludes in his letter describing his visit to Lady Mary after her return. Lady Mary left a small legacy to Doctor Mora, whom she mentions in the will as having "faithfully served me seven years."—T.

³ It seems almost needless to observe that this letter is written in a spirit of jesting, or, to use a lower word, of *fun*. Antonio, or Signor Antonio Mocenigo, being mentioned elsewhere as eighty-six years of age, and the head of a great Venetian family, we may conclude that what is said of the two other persons named was as ludicrously impossible as his singing at the opera.—W.

⁴ Charles Spencer, Duke of Marlborough, was the second son of Lady Sunderland. He succeeded to the title of the Earl of Sunderland on the death of his

confess the writer of the English newspaper (which I have seen by making interest with the secretary of his excellency) has taken all laudable pains to soften the affliction of his readers, by making such a panegyric as would force a smile from Heraclitus himself; he assures us that his dowager and children have cried bitterly, and that both his sons-in-law and many other people of the first quality will wear mourning on this sad occasion. Had I been worthy to have been consulted by this well-pensioned author, I would have added with great truth that more sincere tears have been shed for his loss, than for all the heroes departed for this last century; God knows how many breaking tradespeople and honest scriveners and usurers are breaking their hearts for this untimely fall.

They may be false who languish and complain,
But they who sigh for money never feign.

I beg pardon for this verse, but the subject is too elevated for prose: I dare swear there are at least fifty elegies (besides the bellman's) already presented to his wretched consort and mourning heir. The younger sons, I am sure, grieve from their souls, unless their brother will generously, I don't say promise (a promise is cold comfort), solidly settle such a provision as he is no way obliged to, and may possibly forget.

I adore the conduct of the heroic countess; her amusements are worthy the generosity of a great soul; she knows how to put men to the right use:

Their thanks she neither asks nor needs,
For all the favours done;
From her love flows, as light proceeds
Spontaneous from the sun.

If I really was so skilled in magic as I am generally supposed, I would immediately follow her footsteps in the figure of fair fifteen, acknowledge the errors of my past life, and

elder brother Robert, and to the dukedom of Marlborough upon that of his aunt Henrietta Duchess of Marlborough, whose only son, Lord Blandford, died before her. The duke's profuseness and carelessness of his affairs were remarkable; but Lady Mary Wortley might perhaps be the more severe upon him, because he had been at open war with her old friend, his grandmother, the Duchess Sarah, some of whose prejudices she allowed to influence her opinions.—W. The duke died 20th of October, 1758, at Munster, in Westphalia.—T.

beg her instructions how to behave to that tyrannical sex, who with absurd cruelty first put the invaluable deposit of their precious honour in our hands, and then oblige us to prove a negative for the preservation of it. I hate mankind with all the fury of an old maid (indeed most women of my age do), and have no real esteem but for those heroines who give them as good as they bring.

I have serious thoughts of coming to Tübingen this spring. I shall have the pleasure of seeing friends I truly esteem, and enjoying conversation that I both respect and love. Beside the advantage of being casually admitted in the train of Madame de B.,¹ *née* O. I confess I don't deserve it after the stupid English way in which I received her advances; I own my sins of omission, but am a true convert to her merit, for reasons that I believe you will think good if I am so happy to see you again.—This minute brings me a long letter from my little gentlewoman at court. She gives me such an account of the late D. of Marlborough's affairs, as takes away all doubt of his well-being in the next world. He is certainly eminently distinguished amongst the babes and sucklings: to say truth, I never could perceive (though I was well acquainted with him) that he had the least tincture of the original sin; you know that was the distinction of good and evil, of which whole crowds are entirely clear, and it has been water thrown away to christen them. I have been tempted formerly to turn Quaker on this sole argument.

I am extremely sorry for any affliction that has befallen Lord M. [Marischal?]; both he and myself have had disappointments enough in life to be hardened against most sensations: I own the loss of a beloved deserving friend is the hardest trial of philosophy. But we are soon to lose ourselves; a melancholy consolation, yet not so melancholy as it may appear to people who have more extensive views in prospect.

Dear Lady Fanny, this letter is to you both, designed to make you smile, laugh if you will; but be so just as to believe me, with warm affection and sincere esteem,

Ever yours.

¹ Madame de Bocage, a French lady.—T.

N.B. You are obliged to me for the shortness of this epistle : when I write to you, I could write all day with pleasure, but I will not indulge even a pleasure at the expense of giving you trouble. If my paper and your patience was not at an end, I would say something to Mr. Steuart.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Dec. 5, 1758.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have now been two posts without answering yours of Nov. 6th, having my head too muddled to write (don't laugh at me if you can help it), but it really has been occasioned by the vexation arising from the impudence of Dodsley, whom I never saw, and never mentioned or thought of in my life. I know you will tell me that in my situation I ought to be as indifferent to what is said of me at London as in Pekin ; but—I will talk no more on this disagreeable subject.

The fine ladies I spoke of, I hear, are at Paris, and perhaps may find reasons for staying there. We have lately a very agreeable English family here, a Mr. Wright, many of whose relations I know and esteem in England. His lady is niece to Lord Westmoreland. She is a very pretty, sensible young woman. The union between her and her spouse put me in mind of yours with Lord Bute. They have been stopped here by her lying-in, unfortunately, of a dead child ; but are preparing for Rome and Naples ; and from thence design to return home. I think I may recommend her acquaintance to you, as one that you will be pleased with, and need not fear repenting. Their conversation is the greatest pleasure I have here. I have reason to applaud their good nature, who seem to forget I am an old woman ; the tour they propose is so long you may probably not see them this two years. I am told Mr. Mackenzie is arrived at Turin with Lady Betty. I wish heartily to see them, but am afraid it is impossible. They cannot quit that capital, and the journey is too long for me to undertake. Neither do I desire to visit a town where I have so many acquaintance, and have been so well received. I could not decently refuse civilities that would draw me into a

crowd as displeasing to me at present, as it would have been delightful at fifteen. Indeed, there is no great city so proper for the retreat of old age as Venice; where we have not the *embarras* of a court, no devoirs to force us into public; and yet (which you will think extraordinary) we may appear there without being ridiculous. This is a privilege I do not often make use of, but am not sorry to have it in my power to hear an opera without the mortification of showing a wrinkled face.

I hope you will not forget to send me the bill of loading, without which I run a risk of losing whatever is sent by sea. I am very fond of the jars, which I look upon as a present from your father. I am ever, my dearest child,

Your most affectionate mother.

My blessing to all yours, and compliments to Lord Bute.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

December 31, 1759 [1758].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am very sorry for the pain you have suffered from Lady Jane's indisposition. That distemper is seldom fatal to children or very young people. I have sometimes known it to be so to grown persons. I hope you take all proper care to preserve yourself. The young Earl of Northampton is now at Florence, and was here the last year. He is lively and good natured, with what is called a pretty figure. I believe he is of a humour likely to marry the first agreeable girl he gets acquainted with at London.¹ I send this by a gentleman who is just returned from making a very extraordinary journey. I dined with him yesterday at General Graham's. He is a sensible man, and gives a good account of his voyage, of which he has drawn a very exact plan. I think Lord Bute will be entertained by his conversation. Almost all books are either defective or fabulous. I have observed, the only true intelligence of distant countries is to be had amongst those who have passed them without the design of publishing their remarks.

¹ He married [on the 13th of September following] Lady Anne Somerset, eldest daughter of Charles Noel Duke of Beaufort.—W.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Venice, Jan. 13, 1761 [1759].

I HAVE indulged myself some time with day-dreams of the happiness I hoped to enjoy this summer in the conversation of Lady Fanny and Sir James S.; but I hear such frightful stories of precipices and hovels during the whole journey, I begin to fear there is no such pleasure allotted me in the book of fate: the Alps were once molehills in my sight when they interposed between me and the slightest inclination; now age begins to freeze, and brings with it the usual train of melancholy apprehensions. Poor human-kind! We always march blindly on; the fire of youth represents to us all our wishes possible; and, that over, we fall into despondency that prevents even easy enterprises: a store in winter, a garden in summer, bounds all our desires, or at least our undertakings. If Mr. Steuart would disclose all his imaginations, I dare swear he has some thoughts of emulating Alexander or Demosthenes, perhaps both: nothing seems difficult at his time of life, everything at mine. I am very unwilling, but am afraid I must submit to the confinement of my boat and my easy-chair, and go no farther than they can carry me. Why are our views so extensive and our power so miserably limited? This is among the mysteries which (as you justly say) will remain ever unfolded to our shallow capacities. I am much inclined to think we are no more free agents than the queen of clubs when she victoriously takes prisoner the knave of hearts; and all our efforts (when we rebel against destiny) as weak as a card that sticks to a glove when the gamester is determined to throw it on the table. Let us then (which is the only true philosophy) be contented with our chance, and make the best of that very bad bargain of being born in this vile planet; where we may find, however (God be thanked), much to laugh at, though little to approve.

I confess I delight extremely in looking on men in that light. How many thousands trample under foot honour, ease, and pleasure, in pursuit of ribands of certain colours, dabs of

embroidery on their clothes, and gilt wood carved behind their coaches in a particular figure? Others breaking their hearts till they are distinguished by the shape and colour of their hats; and, in general, all people earnestly seeking what they do not want, while they neglect the real blessings in their possession—I mean, the innocent gratification of their senses, which is all we can properly call our own. For my part, I will endeavour to comfort myself for the cruel disappointment I find in renouncing Tübingen, by eating some fresh oysters on the table. I hope you are sitting down with dear Lady F. to some admirable red partridges, which I think are the growth of that country. Adieu! Live happy, and be not unmindful of your sincere distant friend, who will remember you in the tenderest manner while there is any such faculty as memory in the machine called¹

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Venice, Jan. 24 [1759].

I RETURN you many thanks for yours of the 5th instant. I never have received any in so short a time from England. I am very sincerely, heartily, glad to hear of your health, but will not trouble you with reading a long letter, which may be uneasy to you, when I write so often and fully to our daughter. I have not heard from her of some time; I hope her silence is not occasioned by any indisposition. I hear her and her family praised very much by every Briton that arrives here. I need not say what comfort I receive from it. It is now finer weather than I ever saw in the season (Naples excepted); the sun shines with as much warmth as in May. I walk in my little garden every morning. I hope you do the same at Bath. May you long continue a blessing to your family and those who know you.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

April 11 [1759].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I desire you will make my sincere congratulations to the Duke and Duchess of Portland on the

¹ It is probable that the signature is required to complete the sense; but I have not seen the originals of the letters to Sir J. and Lady Frances Stuart.—T.

happy disposal of Lady Betty,¹ with my real wishes for her future felicity. I send no compliments to her, who was too much an infant to remember me ; neither do I write to either of her parents, to avoid giving them the trouble of answering a stupid letter. They have business enough on this occasion, and I hope they both know me enough to believe that any descendant from Lady Oxford (could I live so long as to see the third and fourth generation) has a right to my desires (however insignificant my endeavours) to serve them. I once wished much to see Lord Titchfield, he having been the principal favourite of my ever honoured friend, but, as things are managed here, am really glad he does not pass by Venice.

Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, and a worthy clergyman, his governor, are under such ridiculous persecutions, merely for their civilities to me, that I heartily pray none of my friends and relations may travel hither. I should be ashamed (in regard to the Venetians, who are many of them particularly obliging to me) to be slighted ; and very sorry to expose those I wish to be well entertained, to disagreeable treatment, either in their own persons, or in that of the gentlemen who are chose by their guardians to accompany them. You will be so astonished at this account I am afraid you should (as well you may) suspect me of dotage. I confess it is highly incredible ; yet literal simple truth, without the least provocation given by Sir W., who is (as I have already told you), apart from the partiality it is natural for me to have for him, one of the most modest, well-disposed young men I have known abroad, and generally beloved by all that know him : even those who do not imitate his sobriety, applaud his conduct and that of his governor ; whose only crime is, endeavouring to preserve the health and good principles of his pupil. Your worthy friend the general is fully sensible of the ill behaviour of these great people (who fancy they represent their patrons), and has made what remonstrances he could ; which were coldly received, and instead of reformation, an increase of ill manners succeeded. I

¹ Lady Elizabeth Bentinck, married to Thomas Viscount Weymouth, afterwards Marquis of Bath. This marriage took place in May, 1759.—W.

suppose these deep politicians intend to drive me out of the town in a pique ; or more refinedly expect I should desire their recal ; being every day complaining of this odious country, and wishing a more advantageous situation. They do not know me : I cannot be provoked either to misbehave myself to oblige my enemies, or ministerially to reward those that rail against me. I have throughout my long life persisted in no compliance with hush-money ; while I knew I did not want any excuse for my actions. Perhaps I have suffered by it : yet such have ever been my sentiments, which, it may be, you will call wrong-headed.

I am exceeding glad of your father's good health : he owes it to his uncommon abstinence and resolution. I wish I could boast the same. I own I have too much indulged a sedentary humour, and have been a rake in reading. You will laugh at the expression, but I think the literal meaning of the ugly word rake, is one that follows his pleasures in contradiction to his reason. I thought mine so innocent I might pursue them with impunity. I now find that I was mistaken, and that all excesses are (though not equally) blamable. My spirits in company are false fire : I have a damp within ; from marshy grounds frequently arises an appearance of light. I grow splenetic, and consequently ought to stop my pen, for fear of conveying the infection. I would only communicate happiness to my dear child, being ever your most affectionate mother.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

[Indorsed, "From Venice, May 4th, 1759."]

YOU will not be surprised, sir, that after having been promised so valuable and so agreeable a present, I am a little impatient to receive it ; there is no situation in which it would not be highly welcome, but it is doubly so in a town where I am almost as solitary as in a desert. I am extremely concerned at the continuation of Lady Fanny's disorder ; the juvenile dissipations of Mr. Steuart I do not put into the list of misfortunes : application is not to be expected at his age ; perhaps

not to be wished; the judgment must have time to ripen, and when the gaieties of early youth are over, you will see that solidity more firm than if it had appeared prematurely. I am persuaded that you will find him turn out everything you wish, and that he will repay the care of his education by a conduct worthy of such parents.

Here is a fashion sprung up entirely new in this part of the world; I mean suicide: a rich parish priest and a young Celestine monk have disposed of themselves last week in that manner without any visible reason for their precipitation. The priest, indeed, left a paper in his hat to signify his desire of imitating the indifference of Socrates and magnanimity of Cato: the friar swung out of the world without giving any account of his design. You see it is not in Britain alone that the spleen spreads his dominion. I look on all excursions of this kind to be owing to that distemper, which shows the necessity of seeking employment for the mind, and exercise for the body; the spirits and the blood stagnate without motion.

You are to be envied whose studies are not only useful to yourself but beneficial to mankind; even mine (good for nothing as they are) contribute to my health, and serve at least to lull asleep those corroding reflections that embitter life, and wear out the frail machine in which we inhabit.

I enclose a letter from Mr. Duff, in which (he tells me) he has directed in what manner I may receive your inquiry into the principles of Political Economy. I do not doubt enjoying great pleasure and instruction in the reading of it, though I want no fresh inducement to bind me ever, sir,

Your most obliged and affectionate servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, May 22 [1759].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am always pleased to hear from you, but particularly so when I have any occasion of congratulation. I sincerely wish you joy of your infant having gone happily through the small-pox. I had a letter from your father before he left London. He does not give so good an account

of his spirits as you do, but I hope his journeys will restore them. I am convinced nothing is so conducive to health and absolutely necessary to some constitutions. I am not surprised, as I believe you think I ought to be, at Lord Leicester's¹ leaving his large estate to his lady, notwithstanding the contempt with which he always treated her, and her real inability of managing it. I expect you should laugh at me for the exploded notion of predestination, yet I confess I am inclined to be of the opinion that nobody makes their own marriage or their own will: it is what I have often said to the D. [Duchess] of Marlborough, when she has been telling me her last intentions, none of which she has performed; choosing Lord C. [Chesterfield] for her executor, whose true character she has many times enlarged upon. I could say much more to support this doctrine, if it would not lengthen my letter beyond a readable size.

Building is the general weakness of old people; I have had a twitch of it myself, though certainly it is the highest absurdity, and as sure a proof of dotage as pink-coloured ribands, or even matrimony. Nay, perhaps, there is more to be said in defence of the last; I mean in a childless old man; he may prefer a boy born in his own house, though he knows it is not his own, to disrespectful or worthless nephews or nieces. But there is no excuse for beginning an edifice he can never inhabit, or probably see finished. The Duchess of Marlborough used to ridicule the vanity of it, by saying one might always live upon other people's follies: yet you see she built the most ridiculous house I ever saw, since it really is not habitable, from the excessive damp; so true it is, the things that we would do, those do we not, and the things we would not do, those do we daily. I feel in myself a proof of this assertion, being much against my will at Venice, though I own it is the only great town where I can properly reside, yet here I find so many vexations, that, in spite of all my philosophy and

¹ Sir Thomas Coke, K.B., created Baron Lovell, 1728, and Viscount Coke and Earl of Leicester, 1744, died 1759. His lady was Margaret, third daughter and co-heir of Thomas Earl of Thanet, and in 1734 was declared Baroness Clifford.—W.

(what is more powerful) my phlegm, I am oftener out of humour than among my plants and poultry in the country. I cannot help being concerned at the success of iniquitous schemes, and grieve for oppressed merit. You, who see these things every day, think me as unreasonable, in making them matter of complaint, as if I seriously lamented the change of seasons. You should consider I have lived almost a hermit ten years, and the world is as new to me as to a country girl transported from Wales to Coventry. I know I ought to think my lot very good, that can boast of some sincere friends among strangers.¹

Sir W. K. [Wyndham Knatchbull] and his governor, Mr. de Vismes, are at length parted. I am very sorry for them both. I cannot help wishing well to the young man, who really has merit, and would have been happy in a companion that sincerely loved him and studied his interest. My letter is so long I am frightened at it myself. I never know when to end when I write to you. Forgive it amongst the other infirmities of your affectionate mother.

If my things are at sea, I am afraid they are lost. Here have been such storms these three days as never were known at this season. I shall regret nothing so much as your father's present. Perhaps my token to you is also at the bottom of the ocean. That I sent by hand to Lady Mary is fallen into the French hands, as I am told.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, June 24 [1759].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have this minute received yours of May 24th. I am glad the little picture pleases Lady Mary. It is a true representation of the summer dishabille of the Venetian ladies. You have taken no notice of the box I sent by Captain Munden. If it is lost, I will venture nothing more at sea. I have had a letter from Mr. Mackenzie informing me that he has sent my books. I have not yet received them, but hope to have that pleasure in a short time. I could heartily

¹ The latter portion of this paragraph is torn away in the original.—T.

wish to see Lady Betty and your brother-in-law. I fancy I have a thousand questions to ask, in relation to their nephews and nieces. Whatever touches you is important to me. I fear I must not expect that satisfaction. They are obliged to reside at Turin ; and I cannot resolve to appear in a court, where old people always make an ill figure, even when they may have business there. I am not surprised at Lady Waldegrave's good fortune.¹ Beauty has a large prerogative. * * *

Lord Fordwich² arrived here three days ago ; he made me a visit yesterday, and appears a well-disposed youth. Lord Brudenell continues here, and seems to have no desire of seeing his native land. Here are beside a large group of English gentlemen, who will all disperse in a short time. General Graham has promised to oblige me with his company a few days, though his charge finds him so much employment. It may (perhaps) be impossible for him to leave Venice. I suppose you are now at Kew, with all your rising family about you : may they ever be blessings to you ! I believe you that see them every day scarce think of them oftener than I do.

This town is at present very full of company, though the opera is not much applauded. I have not yet seen it, nor intend to break my rest for its sake ; it being about the hour I go to sleep. I continue my college hours, by which I am excluded [from] many fashionable amusements. In recompense, I have better health and spirits than many younger ladies, who pass their nights at the ridotto, and days in spleen for their losses there. Play is the general plague of Europe.

¹ Maria, natural daughter of Sir Edward Walpole, second son of Sir Robert, was married to James Earl of Waldegrave, in May, 1759. Her mother was of exceedingly humble origin. A contemporary, who was well acquainted with the courts of King George the First and Second, thus alludes in a private letter, which I have seen, to this fact : " Lady Waldegrave's mother was the most remarkable beauty I ever heard of. Being taken notice of by Mrs. Secker [the Bishop of Oxford's daughter], who told it to me, when she was in the humble position of sitting on a dust-cart before the bishop's door, that lady had the curiosity to call her in merely to see her nearer, and assured me that, in all her rags and dirt, she never saw a more lovely creature. Some time after she heard she was in the hands of a Covent-garden milliner, who transferred her to Neddy W. [Walpole], who doted on her to the day of her death." Lady Waldegrave afterwards married the Duke of Gloucester.—T.

² George Nassau Clavering Cowper, afterwards Earl Cowper, born August 26, 1738, and died at Florence, 1789.—W.

I know no corner of it entirely free from the infection. I do not doubt the familiarities of the gaming-table contribute very much to that decay of politeness of which you complain. The pouts and quarrels that naturally arise from disputes, must put an end to all complaisance, or even good will towards one another.

I am interrupted by a visit from Mr. Hamilton ; he desires me to make his compliments to you and Lord Bute. I am to you both a most affectionate mother.

My hearty blessing to all yours.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Padua, July 19, 1759.

YOUR letters always give me a great deal of pleasure, but particularly this, which has relieved me from the pain I was in from your silence.

I have seen the Margrave of Baden Dourlach ; but I hope he has forgot he has ever seen me, being at that time in a very odd situation, of which I will not give you the history at present, being a long story, and you know life is too short for a long story.

I am extremely obliged for the valuable present you intend me. I believe you criticise yourself too severely on your style : I do not think that very smooth harmony is necessary in a work which has a merit of a nobler kind ; I think it rather a defect, as when a Roman emperor (as we see him sometimes represented on a French stage) is dressed like a *petit maître*. I confess the crowd of readers look no further ; the tittle-tattle of Madame de Sévigné, and the *clinquant* of Telemachus, have found admirers from that very reason. Whatever is clearly expressed, is well wrote in a book of reasoning. However, I shall obey your commands in telling you my opinion with the greatest sincerity.

I am extremely glad to hear that Lady F. [Frances] has overcome her disorder ; I wish I had no apprehensions of falling into it. Solitude begets whimsies ; at my time of life one

usually falls into those that are melancholy, though I endeavour to keep up a certain sprightly folly that (I thank God) I was born with, but, alas ! what can we do with all our endeavours ! I am afraid we are little better than straws upon the water : we may flatter ourselves that we swim, when the current carries us along.

Thus far I have dictated for the first time of my life, and perhaps it will be the last, for my amanuensis is not to be hired, and I despair of ever meeting with another. He is the first that could write as fast as I talk, and yet you see there are so many mistakes, it wants a comment longer than my letter to explain my insignificant meaning, and I have fatigued my poor eyes more with correcting it than I should have done in scribbling two sheets of paper. You will think, perhaps, from this idle attempt, that I have some fluxion on my sight ; no such matter ; I have suffered myself to be persuaded by such sort of arguments as those by which people are induced to strict abstinence, or to take physic. Fear, paltry fear, founded on vapours rising from the heat, which is now excessive, and has so far debilitated my miserable nerves that I submit to a present displeasure, by way of precaution against a future evil, that possibly may never happen. I have this to say in my excuse, that the evil is of so horrid a nature, I own I feel no philosophy that could support me under it, and no mountain girl ever trembled more at one of Whitfield's pathetic lectures than I do at the word blindness, though I know all the fine things that may be said for consolation in such a case : but I know, also, they would not operate on my constitution. "Why, then" (say my wise monitors), "will you persist in reading or writing seven hours in a day ?" "I am happy while I read and write." "Indeed, one would suffer a great deal to be happy," say the men, sneering ; and the ladies wink at each other, and hold up their fans. A fine lady of threescore had the goodness to add, "At least, madam, you should use spectacles ; I have used them myself these twenty years ; I was advised to it by a famous oculist when I was fifteen. I am really of opinion that they have preserved my sight, notwithstanding

the passion I always had both for reading and drawing." This good woman, you must know, is half blind, and never read a larger volume than a newspaper. I will not trouble you with the whole conversation, though it would make an excellent scene in a farce; but after they had in the best bred way in the world convinced me that they thought I lied when I talked of reading without glasses, the foresaid matron obligingly said she should be very proud to see the writing I talked of, having heard me say formerly I had no correspondents but my daughter and Mr. Wortley. She was interrupted by her sister, who said, simpering, "You forgot Sir J. S." I took her up something short, I confess, and said in a dry stern tone, "Madam, I do write to Sir J. S. and will do it as long as he will permit that honour." This rudeness of mine occasioned a profound silence for some minutes, and they fell into a good-natured discourse of the ill consequences of too much application, and remembered how many apoplexies, gouts, and dropsies had happened amongst the hard students of their acquaintance. As I never studied anything in my life, and have always (at least from fifteen) thought the reputation of learning a misfortune to a woman, I was resolved to believe these stories were not meant at me: I grew silent in my turn, and took up a card that lay on a table, and amused myself with smoking it over a candle. In the mean time (as the song says),

" Their tattles all run, as swift as the sun,
Of who had won, and who was undone
By their gaming and sitting up late."

When it was observed I entered into none of these topics, I was addressed by an obliging lady, who pitied my stupidity. "Indeed, madam, you should buy horses to that fine machine you have at Padua; of what use is it standing in the portico?" "Perhaps," said another, wittily, "of as much use as a standing dish." A gaping schoolboy added with still more wit, "I have seen at a country gentleman's table a venison-pasty made of wood." I was not at all vexed by said schoolboy, not because he was (in more senses than one) the highest of the company, but knowing he did not mean to

offend me. I confess (to my shame be it spoken) I was grieved at the triumph that appeared in the eyes of the king and queen of the company, the court being tolerably full. His majesty walked off early with the air befitting his dignity, followed by his train of courtiers, who, like courtiers, were laughing amongst themselves as they followed him: and I was left with the two queens, one of whom was making ruffles for the man she loved, and the other slopping tea for the good of her country. They renewed their generous endeavours to set me right, and I (graceless beast that I am) take up the smoked card which lay before me, and with the corner of another wrote—

If ever I one thought bestow
On what such fools advise,
May I be dull enough to grow
Most miserably wise.

And flung down the card on the table, and myself out of the room, in the most indecent fury. A few minutes on the cold water convinced me of my folly, and I went home as much mortified as my Lord E. when he has lost his last stake at hazard. Pray don't think (if you can help it) this is an affectation of mine to enhance the value of a talent I would be thought to despise; as celebrated beauties often talk of the charms of good sense, having some reason to fear their mental qualities are not quite so conspicuous as their outside lovely form.—*A propos* of beauties:

I know not why, but Heaven has sent this way
A nymph, fair, kind, poetical, and gay;
And what is more (tho' I express it dully),
A noble, wise, right honourable cully:
A soldier worthy of the name he bears,
As brave and senseless as the sword he wears.

You will not doubt I am talking of a puppet-show; and indeed so I am; but the figures (some of them) bigger than the life, and not stuffed with straw like those commonly shown at fairs. I will allow you to think me madder than Don Quixote when I confess I am governed by the *que-dira-t-on* of these things, though I remember whereof they are made, and know they are but dust. Nothing vexes me so much as that they are below satire. (Between you and me) I think there are

but two pleasures permitted to mortal man, love and vengeance; both which are, in a peculiar manner, forbidden to us wretches who are condemned to petticoats. Even vanity itself, of which you daily accuse us, is the sin against the Holy Ghost not to be forgiven in this world or the next.

Our sex's weakness you expose and blame,
 Of every prating fop the common theme;
 Yet from this weakness you suppose is due
 Sublimer virtue than your Cato knew.
 From whence is this unjust distinction shown?
 Are we not formed with passions like your own?
 Nature with equal fire our souls endued:
 Our minds as lofty, and as warm our blood.
 O'er the wide world your wishes you pursue,
 The change is justified by something new,
 But we must sigh in silence and be true. }

How the great Dr. Swift would stare at this vile triplet! And then what business have I to make apologies for Lady Vane, whom I never spoke to, because her life is writ by Dr. Smollett, whom I never saw? Because my daughter fell in love with Lord Bute, am I obliged to fall in love with the whole Scots nation? 'Tis certain I take their quarrels upon myself in a very odd way; and I cannot deny that (two or three dozen excepted) I think they make the first figure in all arts and sciences; even in gallantry, in spite of the finest gentlemen that have finished their education at Paris.

You will ask me what I mean by all this nonsense, after having declared myself an enemy to obscurity to such a degree that I do not forgive it to the great Lord Viscount Bolingbroke, who professes he studied it. I dare swear you will sincerely believe him when you read his celebrated works. I have got them for you, and intended to bring them. *Oime! l'huomo propone, Dio dispone.* I hope you won't think this dab of Italian, that slid involuntarily from my pen, an affectation like his Gallicisms, or a rebellion against Providence, in imitation of his lordship, who I never saw but once in my life: he then appeared in a corner of the drawing-room, in the exact similitude of Satan when he was soliciting the court of Heaven for leave to torment an honest man.

There is one honest man lately gone off the stage, which

(considering the great scarcity of them) I am heartily sorry for : Dr. J * * *, who died at Rome with as much stoicism as Cato at Utica, and less desperation, leaving a world he was weary of with the cool indifference you quit a dirty inn, to continue your journey to a place where you hope for better accommodation. He took part of a bowl of punch with some Englishmen of my acquaintance the day before his death, and told them with a firm tone of voice, “by G— he was going.” I am afraid neither Algarotti¹ nor Valsinura will make their exit with so good a grace. I shall rejoice them both by letting them know you honour them with a place in your memory, when I see them ; which I have not done since you left Padua. Algarotti is at Bologna, I believe, composing panegyrics on whoever is victor in this uncertain war ; and Valsinura gone to make a tour to add to his collection. Which do you think the best employed ? I confess I am woman enough to think the naturalist who searches after variegated butterflies, or even the lady who adorns her grotto with shades of shells, nay, even the devout people who spend twenty years in making a magnificent *presepio* at Naples, throw away time in a more rational manner than any hero, ancient or modern ; the lofty Pindar, who celebrated the Newmarket of those days, or the divine Homer, who recorded the bloody battles the most in fashion, appear to me either to have been extremely mistaken or extremely mercenary.

This paragraph is to be a dead secret between Lady F. and yourself. You see I dare trust you with the knowledge of all my defects in understanding. Mine is so stupified by age and disappointment, I own I have lost all taste for worldly glory. This is partly your fault : I experienced last year how much happiness may be found with two amiable friends at a *leger repas*, and 'tis as hard to return to political or gallant conversations, as it would be for a fat prelate to content himself with the small beer he drank at college. You have furnished me with a new set of notions ; you ought to be punished for it ; and I fancy you will (at least in your heart) be of

¹ Count Algarotti, the celebrated Italian savant.—T.

opinion that I have very well revenged myself by this tedious, unconnected letter. Indeed, I intend no such thing, and have only indulged the pleasure everybody naturally feels when they talk to those they love; as I sincerely do to yourself, and dear Lady F., and your young man, because he is yours.¹

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, Aug. 10 [1759].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours by Mr. Hamilton with exceeding pleasure. It brought me all the news I desire to hear—your father's health and your prosperity being all the wishes I have on earth. I think few people have so much reason to bless God as yourself—happy in the affection of the man you love; happy in seeing him high in the general esteem,

“Lov'd by the good, by the oppressor feared;”

happy in a numerous, beautiful posterity. Mr. Hamilton gave me such an account of them as made me shed tears of joy, mixed with sorrow that I cannot partake the blessing of seeing them round you. He says Lady Anne is the beauty of the family, though they are all agreeable. May they ever continue an honour to you, and a pleasure to all that see them.

There are preparations, at Venice, for a regatta: it can hardly be performed till the middle of next month. I shall remove thither to see it, though I have already seen that which was exhibited in compliment to the Prince of Saxony. It is by far the finest sight in Europe (not excepting our own coronations); it is hardly possible to give you any notion of it by description. The general [Graham] has shown me a letter from Lord Bute, very obliging to me, and which gives a very good impression both of his heart and understanding, from the honest resolutions and just reflections that are in it. My time here is entirely employed in riding, walking, and reading. I see little company, not being of a humour to join in their

¹ In this letter “the king and queen” apparently mean Mr. and Mrs. Murray, the English resident at Venice and his wife, with whom Lady Mary was on the worst terms imaginable.—W.

diversions. I feel greatly the loss of Sir James Steuart and Lady Fanny, whose conversation was equally pleasing and instructive. I do not expect to have it ever replaced. There are not many such couples. One of my best friends at Venice I believe your father remembers. He is Signor Antonio Mocenigo, widower of that celebrated beauty the Procuratessa Mocenigo. He is eighty-two, in perfect health and spirits, his eloquence much admired in the senate, where he has great weight. He still retains a degree of that figure which once made him esteemed one of the handsomest men in the republic. I am particularly obliged to him, and proud of being admitted into the number of seven or eight select friends, near his own age, who pass the evenings with him.

God bless you, my dear child, and all yours. Pray make my compliments to Lord Bute, and return him thanks for the kind manner in which he has mentioned me to the general. I am ever

Your most affectionate mother.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Sept. 26, 1759.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am very glad to find by yours of Sept. 3rd that yourself and family are all in good health. I cannot complain of mine, though the season is more sickly than has been known of many years past, occasioned by the excessive heat. We have had no rain of three months, and if the drought continues the most fatal consequences may be expected. There is already a mortality amongst the cattle, which frightens everybody.

I am invited to a great wedding to-morrow, which will be in the most splendid manner, to the contentment of both the families, everything being equal, even the indifference of the bride and bridegroom, though each of them is extremely pleased, by being set free from governors and governesses. To say truth, I think they are less likely to be disappointed, in the plan they have formed, than any of our romantic couples, who have their heads full of love and constancy.

I have not yet received my books from Mr. Mackenzie, though he has sent them some time ago. I believe you will soon see a Mr. Ferguson, who (between you and I) is, in my opinion, the prettiest man I have seen since I left England. A propos of men, here is lately arrived a tall, fair, well-shaped young fellow, with a good character, the reputation of a good understanding, and in present possession of twelve thousand pounds per annum. His name is Southwell. I charge you not to look upon him; and to lock up your daughters if he should visit Lord Bute. He honoured me with a visit, which hindered my sleeping all night. You will [be] surprised to hear he has neither visible nose nor mouth: yet he speaks with a clear, audible voice. You may imagine such a figure should not be seen by any woman in a possibility of breeding. He appears insensible of his misfortune, and shows himself every day on the Piazza, to the astonishment of all the spectators. I never saw [so] shocking a sight.

My dear child, God bless you and yours. It is the zealous and daily prayer of your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and hearty blessing to all our children.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Nov. 9, 1759.]

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of Oct. 18th this day, Nov. 9th. I am afraid some letters both of yours and mine are lost, nor am I much surprised at it, seeing the managements here. In this world much must be suffered, and we ought all to follow the rule of Epictetus, “Bear and forbear.” General Wolfe¹ is to be lamented, but not pitied. I am of your opinion, compassion is only owing to his mother and intended bride, who I think the greatest sufferer (however sensible I am of a parent’s tenderness). Disappointments in youth are those that are felt with the greatest anguish, when we are all in expectation of happiness, perhaps not to be found in this life.

¹ General Wolfe was killed at the siege of Quebec, in September, 1759.—T.

I am very sorry L. [Lady] F. [Frances] Erskine has removed my poor sister to London, where she will only be more exposed. I would write again to her if I thought it could be any comfort in her deplorable condition. I say nothing to her daughter, who [is] too like her father for me to correspond with.

I am very much diverted with the adventures of the three graces lately arrived in London, and am heartily sorry their mother has not learning enough to write memoirs. She might make the fortune of half a dozen Dodsleys. The youngest girl (called here *Bettina*) is taller than the Duchess of Montagu, and as red and white as any German alive. If she has sense enough to follow good instructions, she will be irresistible, and may produce very glorious novelties. [I know nothing of her, except her figure.¹] Our great minister has her picture amongst his collection of ladies—*basta!*

My health is better than I can reasonably expect at my age, though I have at present a great cold in my head, which makes writing uneasy to me, and forces me to shorten my letter to my dear child. I have received the books from Mr. Mackenzie. Mr. Walpole's is not amongst them. Make my best compliments to Lord Bute, and give my blessing to all your children. Your happiness in every circumstance is zealously wished by (dear child) your most affectionate mother.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Venice, Nov. 23 [1759].

I DO not write to you often, being afraid of being troublesome, and supposing that my daughter communicates my letters to you. I have the pleasure of hearing from her that you have good health and spirits, which I heartily wish the continuance of. I have seen lately a history of the last years of Queen Anne, by Swift. I should be very glad to know your opinion of it. Some facts are apparently false, and I

¹ This is inserted from another copy in Lady Mary's handwriting.—T.

believe others partially represented. The winter is begun here severely, but we have had a most delightful autumn. I hope everything is to your satisfaction in England.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

LORD BRUDENELL¹ is still here, and appears to be in a very bad state of health, and extreme unwilling to return to England, being apprehensive of the air. I fear his parents will have the affliction of losing him, if they resolve to keep him with them: he seems highly disposed to, if not actually fallen into a consumption. We are now in the carnival, and all but myself in eager pursuit of the pleasures of the season. I have had a letter from Mr. Mackenzie, who is excessively liked at Turin. I cannot be persuaded to go thither, but heartily wish I could contrive some other place to see him and Lady Betty. I am determined, on account of my health, to take some little jaunt this spring; perhaps on the side of the Tyrol, which I have never seen, but hear it is an exceeding fine country. To say truth, I am tempted by the letters of Lady F. Steuart and Sir James. I never knew people more to my taste. They reside in a little town but two days from Padua, where it will [be] easy to find a convenient lodging for the summer months, and I am sure of being pleased in their company. I have found, wherever I have travelled, the pleasantest spots of ground have been in the valleys that are encompassed with high mountains.

My letter must end here or not go, the gentleman being come to demand it. He sets out to-morrow, early. I am ever, my dear child, your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours. I would send you my token, but I perceive he does not care to be charged with it.

¹ John Lord Brudenell, only son of George Earl of Cardigan.—W.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[Venice, January, 1760.¹]

I AM always glad to hear of my dear child's health. I daily pray for the continuance of it, and all other blessings on you and your family. The carnival hitherto has been clouded by extreme wet weather, but we are in hopes the sunshine is reserved for the second part of it, after Christmas, when the morning masquerades give all the ladies an opportunity of displaying both their magnificence and their taste, in the various habits that appear at that time. I was very well diverted by them last year. Mr. Southwell has left us some time. I was almost reconciled to his figure by his good behaviour and polite conversation. Here are at present few English. Lord Brudenell ought to be at London. I think I have already told you he resembles his grandfather, but it is a strong caricature. I hear Rome is crammed with Britons. In their turns I suppose we shall see them all. I cannot say the rising generation gives any great prospect of improvement, either in the arts and sciences or in anything else. I am exceedingly pleased that the Duchess of Portland is happy in her son-in-law. I must ever interest myself in whatever happens to any descendant of Lady Oxford. I expect that my books and china should set out. Since the defeat of the French fleet I should imagine there can be no danger on the sea. They will be a great amusement to me; I mix so little in the gay world, and at present my garden is quite useless. I wrote lately to your father, who I guess to be returned to London. I am informed Mr. Mackenzie makes a very good figure at Turin. General Graham has bad health, and Mr. Hamilton is the Lord knows where, which occasions much speculation.

¹ Mr. Dallaway and Lord Wharncliffe date this letter "Venice, Jan. 20, 1758;" but the original has no date or endorsement, except the English postmark. "Feb. 4." It could not have been written in 1758, because it contains an allusion to Mr. Mackenzie being at Turin. From a mention of Lord Brudenell as on his way to England, it was probably written soon after the preceding to Lady Bute, in which Lord Brudenell is also referred to. The presumed date (1760) is further confirmed by the allusion to the defeat of the French fleet, which refers, no doubt, to Sir Edward Hawke's victory on the 20th of November, 1759.—T.

Venice is not a place to make a man's fortune. For those who have money to throw away, they may do it here more agreeably than in any town I know; strangers being received with great civility, and admitted into all their parties of pleasure. But it requires a good estate and good constitution to play deep, and pass so many sleepless nights, as is customary in the best company. Adieu, my dear child. You see I am profoundly dull. I desire you would be so good to attribute it to the gloominess of the weather. It is now almost night, though at noonday. I am in all humours, your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Venice, Feb. 13, 1760.

SIR,—I have waited (in my opinion) with very exemplary patience for your manuscripts; I have not yet received them, but will not longer delay my thanks for your obliging and agreeable letter. I am apt to believe Lord H. may be sincere in saying he is willing to serve you: how far he can be useful is, I think, dubious; you know he is only a subaltern officer. I wish I knew any probable method of ensuring success to your wishes: you may certainly depend on everything that can be done towards it, either by my own or the interest of those whom I can influence.

If I considered merely my own inclinations, I should advise the air of this town, since the physicians are of opinion that the sea would be salutary to your constitution. I dare not press this earnestly, finding myself highly prejudiced where my own happiness is so nearly concerned: yet I can with truth assure you that yours shall always have the first place, and, was it in my power (notwithstanding the real pleasure of such excellent conversation), I would give up all hopes of it, and immediately transport you and Lady Fanny to your native country, where I am persuaded the pleasure of seeing your household Lares, and having your friends round you,

would certainly contribute to your health, if not totally restore it. I heartily congratulate you on your happiness in the growing improvements of Mr. Steuart: it is, perhaps, the most pleasing employment in life to form a young mind well-disposed to receive instruction; when a parent's care is returned with gratitude and compliance, there is no conqueror or legislator that receives such sincere satisfaction. I have not seen the histories you mention, nor have had for this last twelve-month any books from England. It is difficult to send anything from thence, as my daughter informs me; and our travelling young gentlemen very seldom burden themselves with such unnecessary baggage as works of literature.

Give me leave to send my warmest thanks to Lady Fanny for her kind remembrance, and compliments to the young gentleman, who I hope will always be a blessing to you both. It is extreme mortifying to me that I have no better way of expressing how much I am, sir,

Your most obliged and very humble servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Feb. 24 [1760].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I wrote to you, some days ago, a letter by General Graham, but, as many accidents may delay his arrival, I will not omit to thank you for yours of January 18.

I am not so much surprised at Lady Louisa Kerr's flight as you seem to be.¹ Six or seven months is a great while to wait, in the opinion of a young lover, and I do not think Lord George much in the wrong to fear the effect of artifices, absence, and new proposals, that could not fail of being made to her in that time.

The carnival is now over, and we have no more *ridotto* or theatrical entertainments. Diversions have taken a more private, perhaps a more agreeable, turn. It is the fashion to have little houses of retreat, where the lady goes every evening,

¹ "There is nothing domestic, but that Lord George Lennox, being refused Lord Ancram's consent, set out for Edinburgh with Lady Louisa Kerr the day before yesterday."—*Horace Walpole to George Montagu*, Dec. 23, 1759.—T.

at seven or eight o'clock, and is visited by all her intimates of both sexes, which commonly amount to seventy or eighty persons, where they have play, concerts of music, sometimes dancing, and always a handsome collation. I believe you will think these little assemblies very pleasing; they really are so. Whoever is well acquainted with Venice must own that it is the centre of pleasure; not so noisy, and, in my opinion, more refined than Paris.

I am extremely glad Lady Jane turns out so much to your satisfaction; though I am told Lady Anne is the beauty. We have now no English here. Mr. Wright and his lady, Mr. Stuart, and Mr. Panton, set out together a few days ago, intending for Rome and Naples. I suppose the Ascension will bring us a fresh cargo, as I hear there are many dispersed about Italy. Lord Brudenell seemed to leave it with great reluctance. He is singular both in his manner and sentiments. Yet I am apt to believe if he meets with a sensible wife, she may be very happy with him. Whoever leaves him at his liberty will certainly meet no contradiction from him who is too indolent to dispute with anybody, and appears indifferent to our sex. [I am] persuaded he will [not?] be any [torn] recommended by [torn] parents without hesitation.

I have had lately a letter from poor Lady Blount.¹ She is now in easy circumstances if she can manage discreetly. I have a great regard for the uncommon sincerity of her character, but am afraid she will be always too open to the attacks of flattery. Adieu, my dear child. God bless you and yours, which [is] the most zealous prayer of your truly affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Venice, March 1, 1760.

I HAVE at length received your valuable and magnificent present. You will have me give my opinion; I know not

¹ Anne, daughter of Charles Cornwallis, Esq., of Medlow, and widow of Sir Harry Pope Blount, of Tittenhanger.—T.

how to do it without your accusing me of flattery (though I am sure no other person would suspect it). It is hard to forbear praising where there is so much due; yet I would rather talk of your performance to any other than yourself. If I durst speak out, I would say, that you have explained in the best manner the most difficult subject, and struck out new lights that are necessary to enforce conviction even to those who have studied the points you treat; and who are often misled by prejudices which fall away, while your instructions take place in every mind capable of distinguishing truth from falsehood. Upon the whole, permit me to say, I never saw a treatise which gave me so much pleasure and information. You show yourself qualified by nature for the charge of first minister; how far that would recommend you to a minister I think problematic. I am beginning to read over your work a second time; my approbation increases as I go on; the solidity of your reflections would overbalance a defect in style, if there was any, but I sincerely find none. The nervous manner in which you write is infinitely preferable to the florid phrases, which are always improper in a book of this nature, which is not designed to move the passions but to convince the reason.

I ought to say a great deal for the honour you have done me in your dedication. Lord Burleigh, or even Julius Cæsar, would have been proud of it; I can have no pretence to deserve it, yet I may truly say, nobody can be more sensible of the value of your present. It is pity the world should be deprived of the advantage of so useful a performance; yet perhaps it may be necessary to wait some time before you publish certain truths that are not yet popularly received.

I hope our dear Lady Fanny is in good health, and your young gentleman daily improving both by nature and instruction. I flatter myself that your affairs will soon take a more agreeable turn. Wherever you are, I wish you every happiness; and wherever I am, you will ever have a faithful humble servant, engaged both by inclination and obligation to be always at your command.

N.B. This letter indorsed thus by Sir James Steuart himself: "On receiving a MS., neatly bound and gilt, of the two first books of my Pol. Economy, with a dedication to her ladyship."

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Venice, April 7, 1760.

I HAVE now with great pleasure, and I flatter myself with some improvement, read over again your delightful and instructive treatise; you have opened to me several truths of which I had before only a confused idea. I confess I cannot help being a little vain of comprehending a system that is calculated only for a thinking mind, and cannot be tasted without a willingness to lay aside many prejudices which arise from education and the conversation of people no wiser than ourselves. I do not only mean my own sex when I speak of our confined way of reasoning; there are very many of yours as incapable of judging otherwise than they have been early taught, as the most ignorant milkmaid: nay, I believe a girl out of a village or a nursery more capable of receiving instruction than a lad just set free from the university. It is not difficult to write on blank paper, but 'tis a tedious if not an impossible task to scrape out nonsense already written, and put better sense in the place of it. Mr. Steuart is very happy to be under the direction of a father who will not suffer him to entertain errors at an age when 'tis hard to distinguish them. I often look back on my past life in the light in which old Montaigne considered it; it is, perhaps, a more useful study than it is generally imagined. Mr. Locke, who has made the best dissection of the human mind of any author I have ever read, declares that he has drawn all his observations from reflecting on the progression of his own ideas. It is true a very small proportion of knowledge is allowed us in this world, few truths permitted, but those truths are plain; they may be overseen or artfully obscured from our sight, but when pointed out to us, it is impossible to resist the conviction that accompanies them. I am persuaded your manuscript would have the same effect on every candid reader it has on me: but I am afraid their number is very small.

I think the omission you desire in the act of indemnity cannot fail of happening; I shall take every opportunity of putting people of my acquaintance in mind of it: at present,

the real director¹ (at least of home affairs) is a countryman of yours; but you know there are certain circumstances that may disincline from meddling in some nice matters. I am always with gratitude and the truest esteem, both to Lady Frances and yourself, a faithful humble servant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

April 15 [25, ? 1760].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am very uneasy at hearing nothing from you or General G. [Graham], being told he has been arrived near a month. I do not doubt his first visit was to you, having given him a letter which I desired him to deliver with all speed. Perhaps I was more frightened than I need to be when I wrote it. All weaknesses appear, as they increase, with age. I am afraid all human-kind are born with the seeds of them, though they may be totally concealed, and consequently considerably lessened, by education and philosophy. I have endeavoured to study and correct myself; and as courage was the favourite virtue in my early youth, I studied to seem void of fear, and I believe was rather esteemed foolhardy.

I am now grown timorous, and inclined to low spirits, whatever you may hear to the contrary. My cheerfulness is like the fire kindled in brushwood, which makes a show, but is soon turned to cold ashes. I do not, like Madame Maintenon, grieve at the decay which is allotted to all mortals, but would willingly excuse to you the heat that was in my last. I would by no means have you give the least uneasiness to your father. At his time of life the mind should be vacant and quiet. As for the rest, let Providence as it will dispose of your most affectionate mother.

You may be surprised I sent you no token by the general.

¹ Lord Mansfield is probably here alluded to. He was a member of the cabinet during the last years of George the Second's reign, and supposed to have great influence with the Duke of Newcastle, the nominal head of that administration. The circumstances of his having been himself attached on the score of early Jacobitism, might make him cautious of appearing to protect persons in Sir J. Steuart's situation.—W.

To say truth, he was in so ill a state of health, I was afraid he should die on the road. I shall be more explicit in my next.

My sincere good wishes to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, May 9, 1760.

MY DEAR CHILD must forgive me if I load her with letters. I confess I am so uneasy at the silence of General Graham and yours, that I have little peace of mind. I sent by him a letter of great importance to me. I am told he is arrived two posts ago. I have no notice from him that he has seen you, or from you that you have received my scrawl, which, perhaps, you think very impertinent. I cannot suppose he has not seen you, after so many promises to make you his first visit. I will not fancy you are sick, and only imagine you may misapprehend my design in writing. I thank God I can live here in a quiet retirement. I am very far from any view beyond tranquillity; and if I have been so weak to be vexed at the misbehaviour of a fool, I desire not his ruin, and much less that he should be preferred, which will subject me to the same ill usage by whatever successor he is appointed. I am informed he gives political reasons for his conduct towards me, which, if true, I ought to pardon him by all the maxims of modern ethics. I am ever, my dearest child,

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

If you have not already sent my letter to your father, I desire you would not do it.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Nov. 18, 1760.

I GIVE you thanks, my dear child, for your information of the death of the king. You may imagine how I am affected by it. I will not trouble you in this busy time with a long letter. I do not doubt you are sufficiently tormented by pretensions and petitions. I hope you will not forget poor Mr.

Anderson; and I desire Lord Bute to take care that Sir James Steuart's name is not excluded in the act of indemnity. This is a very small favour, yet it will make the happiness of a man of great merit.

My health is very precarious; may yours long continue, and the prosperity of your family. I bless God I have lived to see you so well established, and am ready to sing my *Nunc dimittis* with pleasure.

I own I could wish that we had a minister here who I had not reason to suspect would plunder my house if I die while he is in authority. General Graham is exceedingly infirm, and also so easily imposed on, that whatever his intentions may be, he is incapable of protecting anybody. You will (perhaps) laugh at these apprehensions, since whatever happens in this world after our death is certainly nothing to us. It may be thought a fantastic satisfaction, but I confess I cannot help being earnestly desirous that what I leave may fall into your hands. Do not so far mistake me as to imagine I would have the present M. [Minister] removed by advancement, which would have the sure consequence of my suffering, if possible, more impertinence from his successor.

My dear child, I am ever your most affectionate mother.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Venice, Nov. 20, 1760.

SIR,—I will not trouble you with a long letter; this is only to let you know that as soon as my daughter informed me of the late great event, I immediately put her in mind of your affairs in the warmest manner. I do not doubt it will have the effect I wish. Your interest is one of the most considerable to myself, being with the strongest ties of esteem and gratitude, sir,

Your most obliged and faithful humble servant.

I hope Lady Fanny and your young gentleman are in perfect health.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Nov. 26 [1760].

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am afraid you will think me very troublesome, and that I do not enough consider the various duties you are now obliged to. Indeed, I am thoroughly sensible you have little time to throw away, but I am (privately) solicited to mention a thing to you, which, in my opinion, I ought not to omit.

The senate have appointed two procurators of St. Mark to compliment his majesty on his accession. They are of the first families here, Contarini and Morosini, and are neither of them married. Madam Capello has been so ridiculous, both at London and Rome, I believe they will not often send ambassadors. These cavaliers are of such a character as will do honour to their country: they are vastly rich, and desirous to show their magnificence in the court of England. They apprehend (I know not why) that they shall be thanked and not permitted to come. I am far from a politician, God knows, but it seems to me, both in public and private life, civilities should never be refused, when they are sincerely meant as proofs of respect. I have no personal interest in this affair, nor can receive any advantage from their embassy, but an opportunity of sending some trifles to my granddaughter, which I hoped to do by Lord Titchfield, who has been long at Turin. I am now told he will not take Venice in his road, when he returns to London.

I am sorry to tell you I fear General Graham is in a declining state of health. I suppose you know poor Mr. Hamilton is at Petersburg. I am ever, my dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

From Venice, 25th of January, 1761.

SIR,—I have not returned my thanks for your obliging letter so soon as both duty and inclination prompted me; but I have had so severe a cold, accompanied with a weakness in

my eyes, that I have^{*} been confined to my store for many days. This is the first use I make of my pen. I will not engage in a dispute with you, being very sure that I am unable to support it against you; yet I own I am not entirely of your opinion in relation to the civil list. I know it has long been a custom to begin every reign with some mark of the people's love exceeding what was shown to the predecessor: I am glad to see this distinguished by the trust and affection of the king to his people, and am persuaded it will have a very good effect on all our affairs, foreign and domestic. It is possible my daughter may have some partiality; the character of his present majesty needs only be half so perfect as she describes it, to be such a monarch as has never existed but in romances. Though I am preparing for my last and longest journey, and stand on the threshold of this dirty world, my several infirmities like post-horses ready to hurry me away, I cannot be insensible to the happiness of my native country, and am glad to see the prospect of a prosperity and harmony that I never was witness to. I hope my friends will be included in the public joy; and I shall always think Lady Fanny and Sir James Steuart in the first rank of those I wish to serve. Your conversation is a pleasure I would prefer to any other, but I confess even that cannot make me desire to be in London, especially at this time, when the shadow of credit that I should be supposed to possess would attract daily solicitations, and gain me a number of enemies, who would never forgive me the not performing impossibilities. If all people thought of power as I do, it would be avoided with as much eagerness as it is now sought. I never knew any person that had it who did not lament the load; though I confess (so infirm is human nature) they have all endeavoured to retain it, at the same time they complained of it.

You are above any view of this kind. I hope every post to hear news of your return to your native country, where that you may long enjoy a happiness superior to any a court can give, is the most ardent desire of, sir,

Your grateful and faithful humble servant.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Venice, April 12, 1761.

SIR,—I received your obliging letter yesterday, and make haste to answer it the first post. I am very sincere in assuring you all your interests are mine, consequently I share with you the concern you feel for Lady Fanny's disorders. You observe justly there is no happiness without an alloy, nor indeed any misfortune without some mixture of consolation, if our passions permitted us to perceive it; but alas! we are too imperfect to see on all sides; our wisest reflections (if the word wise may be given to humanity) are tainted by our hopes and fears; we all indulge views almost as extravagant as those of Phaeton, and are angry when we do not succeed in projects that are above the reach of mortality. The happiness of domestic life seems the most laudable as it is certainly the most delightful of our prospects, yet even that is denied, or at least so mixed, "we think it not sincere, or fear it cannot last." A long series of disappointments have perhaps worn out my natural spirits, and given a melancholy cast to my way of thinking. I would not communicate this weakness to any but yourself, who can have compassion even where your superior understanding condemns. I confess that though I am (it may be) beyond the strict bounds of reason pleased with my Lord Bute's and my daughter's prosperity, I am doubtful whether I will attempt to be a spectator of it. I have so many years indulged my natural inclinations to solitude and reading, I am unwilling to return to crowds and bustle, which would be unavoidable in London. The few friends I esteemed are now no more: the new set of people who fill the stage at present are too indifferent to me even to raise my curiosity. I now begin to feel (very late, you'll say) the worst effects of age, blindness excepted; I am grown timorous and suspicious; I fear the inconstancy of that goddess so publicly adored in ancient Rome, and so heartily inwardly worshipped in the modern. I retain, however, such a degree of that uncommon thing called common sense, not to trouble the felicity of my children with my foreboding

dreams, which I hope will prove as idle as the croaking of ravens, or the noise of that harmless animal distinguished by the odious name of screech-owl. You will say why then do I trouble you with my old wives' prophecies? Need I tell you that it is one of the privileges of friendship to talk of our own follies and infirmities? You must, then, nay you ought, to pardon my tiresome tattle in consideration of the real attachment with which I am unalterably, sir,

Your obliged and faithful humble servant.

My best compliments to dear Lady Fanny, and congratulations to the young gentleman. I do not doubt he is sorry to leave her; but if it be necessary for his advancement, you will teach him to suffer it at least with patience.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

July 22, 1761.

SIR,—I expect you should wish me joy on the good fortune of a friend I esteem in the highest manner. I have always preferred the interest of those I love to my own. You need not doubt of my sincere affection towards the lady and young gentleman you mention. My own affairs here grow worse and worse; my indiscreet well-wishers do me as much harm, more harm than any declared enemy could do. The notable plan of our great politician is to make me surrender my little castle; I, with the true spirit of old Whiggism, resolve to keep my ground, though I starve in the maintaining it, or am eat up by the wild beasts of the wood, meaning gnats and flies. A word to the wise; you understand me. You may have heard of a facetious gentleman vulgarly called Tom Earle, *i. e.* Giles Earle,¹ Esq. His toast was always—

“God bless you, whatever becomes of me!”

The day when hungry friar wishes,
He might eat other food than fishes,
Or, to explain the date more fully,
The twenty-second instant July.

¹ A lord of the Treasury. See Honourable Horace Walpole's Letters to Sir Horace Mann, Dec. 16, 1741, for an account of a debate and a division upon the occasion of the election of the chairman of the committees of the House of Commons, in which some account of this gentleman is to be found.—W.

TO SIR JAMES AND LADY FRANCES STEUART.

[Indorsed, "Oct. 1st, 1761, Augsburg, on her way from Venice to England;
received 3rd of Nov."]

MADAM AND SIR,—I am now part of my way to England, where I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you: it is so long since I have heard from you, I cannot guess where you are. I venture this to Tubingen, though I fancy two letters I have directed thither have miscarried, and am so uncertain of the fate of this I know not what to say. I think I cannot err in repeating a sincere truth, that I am, and ever shall be, faithfully,
Your most humble servant.

Since I wrote the above, I am told I may go by Wurtemberg to Frankfort. I will then take that road in hopes of seeing you.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Rotterdam, Nov. 20, 1761.

SIR,—I received yesterday your obliging and welcome letter by the hands of Mr. Simpson. I tried in vain to find you at Amsterdam; I began to think we resembled two parallel lines, destined to be always near and never to meet. You know there is no fighting (at least no overcoming) destiny. So far I am a confirmed Calvinist, according to the notions of the country where I now exist. I am dragging my ragged remnant of life to England. The wind and tide are against me; how far I have strength to struggle against both I know not; that I am arrived here is as much a miracle as any in the golden legend; and if I had foreseen half the difficulties I have met with, I should not certainly have had courage to undertake it. I have scrambled through more dangers than his M. of P. [His Majesty of Prussia], or even my well-beloved cousin (not counsellor) Marquis Granby;¹ but my spirits fail me when I think of my friends risking either health or happiness. I will write to Lady Fanny to hinder your coming to Rotterdam, and will sooner make one jump more myself to wait

¹ Lord Granby married the daughter of Charles sixth Duke of Somerset, by his wife the youngest daughter Daniel of Earl of Winchelsea and Nottingham; whose wife was the daughter of Basil Earl Fielding and Lady Mary's first cousin.—W.

on you at Antwerp. I am glad poor D. has sold his medals. I confess I thought his buying them a very bold stroke. I supposed that he had already left London, but am told that he has been prevented by the machinations of that excellent politician and truly great man, M. [Murray], and his ministry.

My dear Lady Fanny, I am persuaded that you are more nearly concerned for the health of Sir James than he is himself. I address myself to you, to insist on it to him, not to undertake a winter progress in the beginning of a fit of the gout.

I am nailed down here by a severe illness of my poor Marianne,¹ who has not been able to endure the frights and fatigues that we have passed. If I live to see G. Britain, you will have there a sincere and faithful servant that will omit no occasion of serving you; and I think it almost impossible I should not succeed. You must be loved and esteemed wherever you are known. Give me leave, however, dear madam, to combat some of your notions, or, more properly speaking, your passions. Mr. Steuart is in a situation that opens the fairest prospect of honour and advancement. We mothers are all apt to regret the absence of children we love: Solomon advises the sluggard to go to the ant and be wise: we should take the example of the innocent inhabitants of the air; when their young are fledged, they are delighted to see them fly and peck for themselves. Forgive this freedom. I have no other receipt for maternal fondness, a distemper which has long afflicted

Your ladyship's obliged and obedient humble servant.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Rotterdam, Dec. 12, 1761.

I RECEIVED last post your agreeable and obliging letter. I am now on the point of setting out for London; very dubious (with my precarious state of health) whether I shall arrive there. If I do, you will certainly hear from me again; if not, accept ('tis all I can offer) my sincerest wishes for the pro-

¹ Her servant, Mary Anne Smith, called in Lady Mary's will Fromenta.—T.

sperity of yourself and family. I do not at all despair of your affairs going according to your desire, though I am not ordained the happiness to see it. My warmest compliments to Lady F., and believe me ever, sir,

Your faithful friend and humble servant.

Behold! a hard impenetrable frost has stopped my voyage, and I remain in the disagreeable state of uncertainty. I will not trouble you with my fruitless complaints: I am sure you have compassion for my present situation.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

Rotterdam, Dec., 1761.

MY DEAR MADAM,—A great snow, weak sight, trouble of mind, and a feeble body, are more than sufficient excuses for a short letter; yet I would not omit a few lines to give you thanks for yours, and repeat to you my real desire to serve you in the most zealous manner. Any relation of Sir James will find a hearty welcome from me when I am in London. I now depend on wind and weather; you know how disagreeable that is. I will not afflict your good heart with my uneasinesses. I hope (and am determined to hope) the best, though in contradiction to appearances. In all humours I am

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant.

P.S. My dear Lady Fanny, we are both low-spirited; let us talk no more of melancholy matters. I should be glad to know the adventure of Sir James with the Countess B., and am sometimes tempted to seek her out, in hopes to edify by her discourse and example.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Rotterdam, Dec. 26, 1761.

SIR,—The thaw is now so far advanced I am in great hopes of moving in a few days. My first care at London will be your affairs: I think it almost impossible I should not succeed. You may assure Lady Fanny no endeavour shall be wanting on my side: if I find any material objection I shall not fail to let you know it; I confess I do not foresee any. A young

gentleman arrived here last night, who is perhaps of your acquaintance—Mr. Hamilton ; he is hastening to London in expectation of an act of grace, which I believe will be granted. I flatter myself with the view of seeing you in England, and can affirm with truth it is one of the greatest pleasures I expect there. Whatever prosperity my family now enjoys, it will add much to my happiness to see my friends easy ; and while you are unfortunate I shall always think myself so. This very dull weather operates on my spirits, though I use my utmost efforts to support them : I beg dear Lady Fanny to do the same ; a melancholy state of mind should never be indulged, since it often remains even when the cause of it is removed. I have here neither amusement nor conversation, and am so infected by the climate, that I verily believe, was I to stay long, I should take to smoking and drinking, like the natives. I should wish you the compliments of the season—a merry Christmas—but I know not how to do it, while you remain in so disagreeable an uncertainty ; yet if you have the company of Mr. Steuart, his bloom of life will insensibly communicate part of his gaiety. If I could have foreseen my stay in this part of the world, I would have made a trip to Antwerp to enjoy a conversation ever honoured and remembered by, sir and madam,

Your most faithful and obedient humble servant.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

Rotterdam, Jan. 2, 1762.

I HAVE been half way to Helvoet, and was obliged to turn back by the mountains of sea that obstructed our passage ; the captain, however, gives me hopes of setting out in two or three days. I have had so many disappointments I can scarce entertain the flattering thought of arriving in London. Wherever I am, you may depend upon it, dear madam, I shall ever retain the warmest sentiments of good will for you and your family, and will use my utmost endeavours to give you better proofs of it than I can do by expressions, which will always fall short of my thoughts.

Many happy new years to you, madam. May this atone for the ill fortune of those that are past, and all those to come be cheerful. Mr. Hamilton, whom I mentioned, has, I believe, got a particular pardon; his case is extraordinary, having no relation to public affairs. I am sorry for poor Duff, and fear that wherever he moves there will be little difference in his situation; he carries with him such a load of indiscretion, it is hardly in the power of Fortune to serve him. We are crowded with officers of all ranks returning to England. The peace seems to be more distant than ever: it would be very indifferent to me if it did not affect my friends; my remaining time in this world is so short, I have few wishes to make for myself, and when I am free from pain ought to think myself happy.

It is uncommon at my age to have no distemper, and to retain all my senses in their first degree of perfection. I should be unworthy of these blessings if I did not acknowledge them. If I am so fortunate to see your ladyship and Sir James in good health at London, it will be a great addition to the satisfaction of, dear madam,

Your faithful and obedient humble servant.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

Great George-street, Hanover-square, March 5, 1762.

DEAR MADAM,—I have written several letters to your ladyship, but I perceive by that I had the honour to receive yesterday they have all miscarried. I can assign no reason for it, but the uncertainty of the post. I am told many mails have been taken, and the letters either thrown away or suppressed. We must suffer this, amongst the common calamities of war. Our correspondence is so innocent, we have no reason to apprehend our secrets being discovered.

I am proud to make public profession of being, dear madam, ever

Your most faithful humble servant.

In writing to you, I think I write to your whole family; I hope they think so too.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

George-street, Hanover-square, April 23, 1762.

BELIEVE me, dear madam, I see my daughter often, and never see her without mentioning (in the warmest manner) your affairs. I hope that when the proper season arrives (it cannot now be far off), all things will be adjusted to your satisfaction. It is the greatest pleasure I expect in the wretched remnant of life remaining to, dear madam,

Your faithful humble servant.

My sincere best wishes to all your ladyship's family.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

[Indorsed "Lady Mary's last letter from London."]

July 2, 1762.

DEAR MADAM,—I have been ill a long time, and am now so bad I am little capable of writing, but I would not pass in your opinion as either stupid or ungrateful. My heart is always warm in your service, and I am always told your affairs shall be taken care of. You may depend, dear madam, nothing shall be wanting on the part of

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant.

THE
ENCHIRIDION OF EPICTETUS.

[The Editor has been induced to print this Translation of the Enchiridion of Epictetus, by Lady Mary Pierrepont, as a great literary curiosity, no less than on account of its intrinsic merit. When she presented it to Bishop Burnet, for his emendations, she was scarcely twenty years old, and at so early an age had merited a place among the learned English ladies of quality. Her pretensions are not invalidated, even should it be thought that her Translation is of the Latin version rather than of the Greek original.—Bishop Burnet's corrections are printed in italics.—W.]

EPICTETI ENCHIRIDION.¹

CHAP. I.

CERTAIN things are in our power, there are others that are not. Opinion, appetite, desire, aversion, are in our power, and in one word, whatsoever we act ourselves. Our bodies, wealth, fame, and command, are not in our power ; and, finally, all things which we do not act.

CHAP. II.

Those things which obey us, are really free in their own nature, neither can any one deprive us of them, nor prohibit us the use of them ; but those things over which we have no power, are subject to servitude and to other impediments.

CHAP. III.

Therefore remember, if you think those things to be free which, in their own nature are subject to power, and look upon the goods of others to be your own, you will be deprived of them, you will lament, be disordered, and accuse both gods and men of injustice. But if you only esteem those things to be your own which are really so, and those to belong to others, which are subject to the power of others, nobody will ever deprive you of them, nobody will hinder you in the use of them ; you will exclaim against nobody, you will blame nobody, you will do nothing by force, nobody will hurt you, and you will have no enemy. Neither will you ever look upon anything as a misfortune.

CHAP. IV.

When therefore you desire anything very earnestly, remember so to undertake it, that you may be *to a good degree* agitated, and *that you do utterly abandon things of one kind, and omit other*

¹ See Lady Mary's letter to Bishop Burnet which accompanied this translation, *anté*, p. 2.—T.

things. For if you *both pursue these, and at the same time do* very much wish power or riches, or the raising of your family, perhaps, in the too eager pursuit, you will *not attain* them *through the eagerness of desire*, and most certainly you will *entirely lose those things* by which only true happiness and liberty is obtained.¹

CHAP. V.

If any misfortune seems to have happened to you, endeavour to be able presently to make this reflection—this seems to be unhappy, it may not be so, to the degree it seems: upon further inquiry, make use of those rules that you have, especially this first and greatest, think whether is this thing subject to your power or that of another? If to another, the answer follows—it does not touch you at all.

CHAP. VI.

Desire always promises to us the end of our desire, and aversion flatters us; we shall never fall into what we hate; he that hearkens to these flatteries, is unhappy when he is frustrated of his wishes, or miserable, if what he is averse to happens to him. But if you are only averse to those things in your power to hinder, nothing will ever happen cross to you; but if you place your aversion on sickness, death, or poverty, it is in the power of fortune to make you wretched.

CHAP. VII.

Remove therefore from yourself all aversion to things that are not placed in your own power, and transfer it to those things which in their nature are subject to your government. But especially subdue your wishes, for if you desire things out of your power, of course, you will not be disappointed, for those things that obey our wills, although they may be justly sought, you have not yet learned after what manner they may reasonably be sought. But even pursue them with such a temper of mind that you may obtain, or quit them easily, and without disturbance of trouble.

CHAP. VIII.

All things which are pursued serve either to use, or pleasure. Remember to consider of what nature they are, beginning from

¹ In order to show that Lady Mary Pierrepont did not translate ignorantly this dubious passage, it may be worthy observation, that the correction made by the bishop is the translation of a different reading, adopted by the learned commentator Simplicius;—consult Wolfii Annotat. in Enchiridion Epicteti, in cap. 4.—W.

the very least of thy wishes. If you love a vase, love it as a vase, and if it is broke, do not disturb yourself; if a little son or a wife, love it as a human thing, for then if it dies you will not be troubled.

CHAP. IX.

Whatever you are going to undertake, think within yourself of what kind that thing is. If you go to wash, figure to yourself what they do in the bath. Some are dashed with the water, some are driven from their places, some are reproached, and others are robbed. So you will not safely enter upon the business, if you say to yourself I shall presently wash, and I shall keep my mind in its ordinary temper. Observe the same rule in every undertaking, for so whatever hindrance you may meet with in your washing, it will presently come into your thoughts. This is not exactly what I would have it, but I will go on in my business in the manner as agreeable to the nature of the thing and my own design. But if I suffer impatiently what is done, I hinder myself in the execution of what I intend.

CHAP. X.

It is not real things that disturb the minds of men, but the opinions that they have of things. For instance, death is no evil in itself, or so it would have seemed to Socrates, but it is the opinion we conceive of death renders it an evil. When therefore we are disappointed or disturbed, let us accuse nobody but ourselves; that is, our own opinions. A fool condemns others for his own misfortunes; he that is half-witted accuses only himself, but the wise man neither complains of himself nor others.

CHAP. XI.

Be not pleased with any outward good that you enjoy. If a horse should say boasting, I am handsome, it would be sufferable; but for you to boast you have a handsome horse, know you boast of your horse's good qualities. What merit, therefore, does that give to you? Your merit is only in the use of those goods fortune has given you; only then boast yourself when you use what you have in the best and properest manner, for then you boast yourself of an excellency that is properly and really your own.

CHAP. XII.

As when a ship is at anchor, it is excusable in a passenger to

amuse himself with gathering shells and herbs by the sea-side; yet he ought always to have his mind fixed upon the ship, and be careful to be ready when the master of the ship calls to him to proceed in his voyage, that he may presently leave you all, and not be hurried unwillingly back to his vessel as a sheep bound and dragged to the slaughter. So it is in life, if instead of a shell or an herb, a little wife or a son be given you for amusement, they must not stop you; and if the master calls, run back to the ship, leaving all them things, neither look behind you. If you are an old man, beware ever to be long from the ship, lest when you are called you should not be ready.

CHAP. XIII.

Do not desire that everything should happen after your fancy, but if you are wise, make all things that happen agreeable to your fancy. Sickness is a disturbance to the body, but not the same to the mind, except you will have it so yourself. Lameness is a trouble to the feet, but none to the soul. The same maxim is just in all circumstances, if you consider whatever happens, nothing can happen that truly touches the mind.

CHAP. XIV.

Whatsoever happens, presently consult with your own thoughts how far it lies in your own power to make it *useful* to you. If your desires are excited by any beautiful *man or woman*, the tempering of those desires are immediately in your power. If bodily labour is imposed on you, a quiet sufferance may lessen the pain; if you are innocently reproached, patience comes in to your rescue. If you accustom yourself to this turn of thought, you are beyond the power of *all false conceptions*.

CHAP. XV.

Never say you have lost anything, but restored it to the giver. Is your son dead? He is restored. Is your farm taken from you? Is not that also restored? But he is a villain that has defrauded you of it. What is that to thee, whom it is the Great Bestower has employed to take it back from thee? As long as he permits thee the use of them, look upon them *not as thy own, but* as the traveller does the conveniences he makes use of in an inn.

CHAP. XVI.

If you study your own happiness, leave off all these kind of

thoughts : If I neglect my estate, I shall have nothing to live on. If I do not chastise my servant, I shall be ill-served. It is better to perish with hunger, free from care and trouble, than to live in universal plenty with a troubled mind ; and it is better your servant be bad, than you unhappy, in too solicitous a watchfulness over him.

CHAP. XVII.

Begin to govern your passions in the smallest things. Is your oil spilt ? Is your *wine stolen* from you ? Submit with patience—*say to yourself, at this rate do I purchase* tranquillity and constancy of mind. Why, there is nothing acquired without labour. When you call your servant, imagine that he may be out of the way, or employed in something you will all have him *do*. But do not make him so great as to have it in his power to give you disturbance.

CHAP. XVIII.

If you would be really wise, neglect outward and superfluous things, though you may be looked upon as mad, or a fool, for so doing. Be not over-forward to appear learned, and if you should be thought so by others, distrust yourself, and the praises that are given you. Know it is no easy thing in your situation in the world, to preserve your mind in the temper it ought to be, and yet to pursue external goods or pleasures, it is impossible to be done, but that you must in some degree neglect either the one or the other.

CHAP. XIX.

If you endeavour that your children, wife, and friends, should live and prosper for ever, *you become* ridiculous, for they are not in your power, and you will have those things to be under your command, which are subject to fortune ; in the same manner if you wish your servant faultless, you are a fool, you wish against the nature of the thing, and what can never be. But if you will not be disappointed, desire only what is within your power. Endeavour therefore what is in your power to perform.

CHAP. XX.

He is the *master of a man* who has it in his power *to preserve, or take from him those things that he desires or is averse to*. Who-soever, therefore, desires to be perfectly free, *must* never wish for

nor dislike any of those things under the command of *another*, *otherwise he must be a slave.*

CHAP. XXI.

Remember to behave yourself in life as you would at a public entertainment. If a dish is proffered to you, take your share modestly. If it passes by you, do not stop it. If it does not presently come to your turn, fall into no impatience; but wait *till it is* brought to you. In this manner wish not over-earnestly for whatever moves your desire: whether children, a wife, or power, or riches, for so thou shalt *at last* be worthy to feast *with* the gods. But *when* these pleasures *are* offered, if you do not only refuse but despise them, you will not be only worthy of partaking the joys of the gods, but sharing their power, for so did Diogenes, Heraclitus, and others, and they merited *to be called* divine persons, *as they were indeed.*

CHAP. XXII.

When you see any one weeping, and in grief, whether for parting with his son, or the loss of his goods, be not so far moved by this object as to esteem those things that have happened to him real evils, but consider with thyself, and it will presently come into thy mind, it is not the thing itself afflicts this man, but the opinion he has conceived of it, *for another person would not be so afflicted for it.* However, endeavour to alleviate his troubles by your discourse, and if the thing deserves it, *groan* with him; but take care *that you be not inwardly grieved.*

CHAP. XXIII.

Remember so to act your part upon this stage, as to be approved by the master, whether it be a short or a long one, that he has given you to perform. If he will have you to represent a beggar, endeavour to act that well; and so, a lame man, a prince, or a plebeian. It is your part to perform well what you represent; it is his to choose what that shall be.

CHAP. XXIV.

If you hear an inauspicious crow croak, be not moved at the omen; but say within yourself, the evil this threatens cannot hurt my mind, it must either fall upon my own body, my estate, my reputation, my children, or my wife; this may, however, portend good to me if I please, for whatsoever shall happen to any of these, it is in my power to draw an advantage from it.

CHAP. XXV.

You will be invincible if you engage in no strife, where you are not sure that *it is in your power* to conquer.

CHAP. XXVI.

If you see any man affected with his great titles, or an ample estate, or any other prosperity, call not him happy, *upon the opinion that happiness consists* in outward things. If thou place thy felicity in these things, subject only to yourself, there will be no room in thy breast for either emulation or envy. You will *not desire to be* a senator, a consul, or an emperor, *but* a FREE MAN. To this freedom there is but one way, the contempt of all things *that are not in our own power*.

CHAP. XXVII.

Remember that *it is not* he who slanders or *beats* you, *who is* guilty of the contumely, but the opinion you conceive of it *as a thing truly reproachful*. When any one raises your anger, know it is only the opinion you have of the affront that provokes you; therefore, in the first place, take care *that outward appearances do not impose upon you, and force your assent to them*; if you can get time and delay, you will *more easily have the power over yourself*.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Place daily before your eyes, death, exile, and all things that are accounted evils, but of all chiefly death. So you will never have *mean thoughts*, or an eager desire for anything.

CHAP. XXIX.

When you begin to undertake the study of wisdom, imagine that you shall be ridiculed, that many will laugh at you, that they will say, Whence proceeds this new fancy to be a philosopher? Whence this piece of supercilious pride? But *let not your behaviour be haughty*, but continue in that practice which seems *the best*, as if God had placed you in *the station you are in*; and be assured if you continue to preserve that character, even those that ridiculed you at first will be your admirers; but if their censures make you *sink under them*, you will be a double jest to them.

CHAP. XXX.

If *it happens that you must* show yourself in the world, or to

approve yourself to another, *do not think* that you are *to depart* from your *own* character. Let it be glory enough for you, *that* you are a philosopher ; appear so to yourself, and be not solicitous to be thought so by any other.

CHAP. XXXI.

Never let these considerations give you disquiet, that you live without any title, and that you have no great post in the world : if to want honour be an evil, there is no greater evil than vice ; and it is better to suffer an evil from fortune than your own faults. *Does it belong to your station to gain an empire ? Or to be called to a feast ? Not at all.* Where then is the shame of being without these things ? Why should you be said to be *in no esteem*, whereas you ought to distinguish yourself only by those things that are in your own power, and these you may arrive at in the highest degree. But you can be no way serviceable to your friends. Which way do you take this ? You have no money to give them ; you cannot make them citizens of Rome. These are things out of your power, and *are* gifts of fortune. But how can one help another to what he wants himself ? Obtain these goods, therefore, (say *some*) that you may bestow them *on us*. If I am able to obtain these advantages, with the preservation of my *modesty*, my faith, and the greatness of my soul, and you can show me the way to it, I will endeavour to obtain them ; but if you require me to lose my own proper goods, that I may obtain for you things *that are* not simply good in themselves, see of *how* unjust and rash an action you *are guilty* ! Which would you rather wish for, money, or a *modest* and honest friend ? Aid me in this—do not ask me to do these things by which I shall *lose these good characters* ; but think, Can you make me of no use to my country ? They answer me, of what use, I beseech you ? You can build neither *porticos* nor baths, for the use of your country. But what of that ? The blacksmith makes no shoes, nor the tailor arms ; it is enough for every one to do the duty of his station. A man that gives his country a truly *modest* and honest citizen, is not useless. But what place have I (perhaps you will say) in the city ? Whatever post you are able to maintain without injuring your truth or *modesty* ; but *if you lay aside these on the design of serving your country, of what real use can you be to it when you are become a shameless and perfidious person ?*

CHAP. XXXII.

Is any one preferred to you at an entertainment, in salutations, or in councils, and *these are good things that happen to him*, you ought to congratulate him; *but if they are on the contrary evil*, there is no occasion of being sorry *that they did not happen to you*. Always remember, *that when you do not things by which that which is not in your own power is to be acquired, you ought not to look for them; you that do not make your court to a man, nor flatter him, ought not to expect to be used at the same rate with one who makes his court constantly, and is ever flattering him*. For every merchandise there is a price to be given. Have you a mind to buy *herbs*, lay down your halfpenny; *for without laying down your money, you will not have them: do not think you are worse used than he who had them given; he paid the price for them which you did not; he has the herbs, and you have not paid for them*. You are not invited to an entertainment, it is because you have not bought the invitation, *which he who makes it, sells to those who flatter him, and are obsequious to him*. Give therefore the price *it is set at, if it is your interest to obtain the things*. If you will not pay *the price*, and yet receive the benefit, you are covetous, and are *as a man without sense*. Instead of a good supper, then I have nothing. Yes; you have the pleasure of knowing you have not commended the man you disliked, nor endured *his insolent behaviour*.

CHAP. XXXIII.

We learn the nature of things by what is most common, and happens equally to all the world. If a neighbour's boy breaks an earthen cup, *or any such thing*, you will presently think this is an usual accident; you ought to think the same whenever that accident happens to yourself, *as you did when it happened to your neighbour*. Look upon greater misfortunes *with the same measure*. If the son, or the wife, of another dies, everybody is ready to cry out, it is the common fate of mortals; but if their own dies, they presently exclaim, Alas for me! Wretch that I am! People ought to remember, *on such occasions, how they were affected when they heard of the like accidents that happened to their neighbours*.

CHAP XXXIV.

As landmarks are not placed to lead travellers out of their way, so neither has nature put evils into the world to lead them to

temptations : and it is every man's own fault that he makes them so. You would disdain to have it in the power of every one you meet, to beat or abuse your body ; do not you blush then to suffer all men to disturb the quiet of your mind, and make you grieved or angry whenever they please to speak ill of you ? Consider both the *beginnings* and the consequences of everything *before* you undertake *it*, otherwise you will begin many things cheerfully, without having weighed what is to follow, that in the end, you *will* be ashamed *of*.

CHAP. XXXV.

Would you overcome at the Olympic games ? With all my heart, the conquest is great and honourable. Consider what you must endure before them, and what is to come after, and with *these* thoughts undertake them. You must enter into a regular way of life ; you must eat what is disagreeable, and abstain from delicacies ; you must inure yourself to hard exercise, and excessive heats and colds ; you must drink no cooling drinks, *nor* wine, *as at other times* ; and finally, observe the orders of your fencing-master, as if he was a doctor ; at length, you *must* enter the combat, sometimes your hands will be crushed, perhaps your feet sprained, you may swallow *great quantities of* dust down your throat, and *be beaten and overcome after all this*. Consider all this, and if it yet pleases you, list yourself among the champions. If you act in another manner, you act as boys. Now they play the part of champions, sometimes *of* musicians, and sometimes *of* gladiators ; they sing to the pipe, and presently after represent tragedies. With the same childish inconstancy, now you will be a fighter, afterwards an orator, by-and-by a gladiator, and at length a philosopher, like a monkey that imitates everything he sees done. You will first love one thing and then another, and nothing as you ought to do, *for you do not* enter upon a thing *after* you have *considered it well, but have been guilty* of rashly following the levity of your own *appetites*. Some, upon seeing a philosopher, *or hearing one say how well did Socrates express this, who can reason so well as he did ?* they presently will also become philosophers.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Whatever you undertake, consider first the nature of the thing *and then* your own nature ; and *whether* you are able to perform *it*.

Would you be *conqueror in all the five games*,¹ or a wrestler? Look upon the strength of your limbs, and the make of your body. Nature has fitted people for different employments. Do you think you shall be able *so* to eat and drink, *to abstain*, and endure as the other champions do? You must labour, break your rest, and abstain from the company of your family; *so you must resolve to be despised*; to be less than *your* companions in whatever business *you* undertake, *whether in honour and authority, in a suit of law, or in any other affair*. Consider these things, and always weigh with yourself, whether what you are going about will *balance* liberty, constancy, and tranquillity of mind; *if otherwise, see that you be not as children are at play, sometimes a philosopher, sometimes a tale-gatherer, an orator, and at last one of the emperor's officers*. *These things do not agree together; you must maintain one part, and be either a good or a bad man*; either apply yourself to *improve your reason and mind, or to pursue external advantages*. It is your part to choose, whether you had rather be internally, or externally *employed*, that is, *maintain* the character of a philosopher, *or of a private person*.

CHAP. XXXVII.

The measures we ought to keep throughout our lives, are according to the duties required of us in the station we are placed. You have a father, it is enjoined you to take care of him, to yield to him in all things; if he chide or beat you it must be endured. But he is an ill father—Nature has not commanded to obey a good father, but a father. My brother is an enemy to me, you ought to preserve your duty to him, neither consider what he does, but what you are, by nature, obliged to do. You cannot be hurt by another, except you are yourself consenting to it. You are then only injured, when you fancy yourself to be injured. So shall you be able to bear the office of a neighbour, a citizen, or a commander, if you always regard what you ought to do in every station of life.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

This ought to be the first principle of your religion, to think rightly of the immortal gods; to believe their being, with a firm

¹ *A quinquertian*, the term for a conqueror in all the five games or exercises of the Pentathla (πενταθλα), running, wrestling, leaping, boxing, and throwing the discus, or quoit.—W.

faith, and that they justly and well dispose of the universe, and all that is in it. Secondly, to obey them, and in everything to submit without murmuring to their administration, and to follow willingly the orders that proceed from a wise and perfect Being ; so will you never repine, nor complain that you are neglected by them ; otherwise you will accuse the gods, or their decrees, for those errors which proceed from your own wrong judgment, and endeavour at other times, by your own strength or management, to attain to those blessings which they only dispose of. If you suppose the gods authors of all that happens in the world, good or evil, if you are disappointed in your wishes, or fall into misfortunes, it is impossible but you must accuse them, as authors of those things. For it is woven in the nature of all creatures, to hate and complain of whatever seems to them to be the cause of their unhappiness ; and on the other hand, to serve and love whatever is useful to their prosperity. It is unreasonable to be pleased with what hurts us, and nobody ever can be satisfied to be a loser ; from hence it is the son reproaches his father, when he does not bestow on him what he thinks good ; and this kindled the war between Eteocles and Polynices, that they both esteemed empire to be a good ; from this reason, the husbandman, the sailor, the merchant, or those that lose a wife or children, even curse the gods, as authors of their losses. But when they are happy, they are then pious. Let your piety be more steadfast ; endeavour to remove from yourself all desires and aversions that are not becoming, and use the same endeavours to preserve an even piety. Offer libations, sacrifices, and first-fruits, after the custom of your country. Chastely and not luxuriously, neither idly, nor covetously, nor yet liberally beyond the bounds of your estate.

CHAP. XXXIX.

When you go to a prophet, or oracle, remember that you are ignorant of the event of the business, and for that reason you go to learn it. Inquire of him with that temper which belongs to a philosopher ; for if it is of the number of those things which is not in our power, it ought not to affect you as a real good or evil. Carry therefore not with you a violent desire or fear, otherwise you will approach him trembling ; it is the wisest and best, never to be very much interested concerning any event. Let it not touch your mind which way soever it happens ; it is your duty to

make a good use of every accident, and suffer it not to be an injury to yourself or any other. When you consult the gods, do it with a steady mind, and if there be any counsel given you, remember whom you have consulted, and whose authority you slight, except you obey it. So receive the oracle, after the example of Socrates, as concerning things, to put off all consideration to the event, since neither reason, nor art, can help them to understand the meaning of the gods. When therefore your country, or your friend, stand in need of your defence, do not consult the priest whether you shall defend them. If he tell you the victims predict the undertaking shall be unhappy, that unhappiness must either signify death, loss of your limbs, or exile. Yet the same reason remains for your undertaking. Danger ought to be shared with your country or friends. Go to that Great Prophet, who would not suffer him in the temple who refused to succour his friend in hazard of his life.

CHAP. XL.

Prescribe to yourself a form of laws, and observe them, both in your own mind, and in your intercourse with the world.

CHAP. XLI.

Generally, silence is the best; but if you must speak, speak in few words; there are times when we ought to talk, but then, not to talk everything. Avoid speaking of the gladiators, the Circensian games, the prizefighters, and all common and idle subjects, and chiefly take care how you praise men, or make comparisons between them.

CHAP. XLII.

In your own family, or to your friends, endeavour to make them wiser or better by your discourses; but among strangers be silent.

CHAP. XLIII.

Do not laugh much, nor from many causes, nor extravagantly.

CHAP. XLIV.

Swear not at all, if you can wholly avoid it; if not, however, avoid it as much as you are able.

CHAP. XLV.

Avoid popular and great entertainments. But if you are called to one, let your meditations not be altered or relaxed, but rather

excited, least you fall into a common practice of frequenting those assemblies. Know that if your companion be dissolute, that corruption will also reach you at length, though your mind was altogether pure and honest before.

CHAP. XLVI.

Provide everything necessary for the body as far as it is necessary for the mind, as meat, drink, clothes, house and servants. Put away all things that belong to ostentation or delicacy.

CHAP. XLVII.

Preserve yourself from all pollutions, without a pride in so doing, or a censoriousness of others; suffer them to follow their inclinations, without blame or boasting of your abstinence.

CHAP. XLVIII.

If anybody tells you, such a one has spoken ill of you, do not refute them in that particular; but answer, had he known all my vices, he had not spoken only of that one.

CHAP. XLIX.

It is not necessary commonly to frequent the theatre, but if any occasion calls you there, let it only appear to yourself, if your thoughts are otherwise employed, and seem satisfied with the diversions there. Among the prizefighters, wish him conqueror who overcomes; so you shall cause no disturbance. Do not you distinguish yourself by shouting or hissing; after it is over, make no disputes concerning what is done, which are of no use to render you wiser or better; if you act in another manner, your mind will seem affected by outward shows.

CHAP. L.

Be not easily persuaded to go to public orations; but if you do go, preserve your gravity, and an equal temper of mind, and at the same time, take care that you are not troublesome to any other.

CHAP. LI.

When you have any dealings with men, especially the nobility, propose to yourself the same manner of behaviour which Socrates or Zeno would in the like case. Let outward show no way affect you, and then you will not want clearness of reason to act rightly the business you have undertaken.

CHAP. LII.

When you go to visit any great man, imagine with yourself, that, perhaps, he will be gone abroad, perhaps he will not be to be seen, it may be the doors may be shut against, or he neglect you, when he sees you. So that if any of these things happen, you will endure them patiently, and not go away exclaiming, or railing; for that is like a plebeian, to cry out against external things.

CHAP. LIII.

In familiar conversation with your intimate friends, have a care of entertaining them with long recitations of your own past dangers, or rogueries of your youth. For it should be no pleasure to you to remember your ill actions, nor can it be agreeable to others to listen to what has happened to you.

CHAP. LIV.

Beware of making the company merry; this silly inclination the most easily makes us fall into the manners of the common people, and will have the force of making the respect lessen, which is due to you, from your acquaintance.

CHAP. LV.

It is dangerous to fall into impure conversation; when anything of the kind is said before you, if the place and person permits, reprove him that spoke; if that is not convenient, by your silence and your blushes show, at least, that you are displeased.

CHAP. LVI.

If the image of any pleasure strikes upon your mind, moderate your desires, and suffer them not to hurry you away, but, examine the thing, and allow yourself time for consideration. Remember every time when you enjoyed your wishes, and how you have afterwards found reason of grief, by those very pleasures, and you will chide your hasty desires, and compare this wish with those that have gone before it. If you deny yourself, by abstinence, you will one day rejoice at the conquest, and praise yourself, within yourself. When, therefore, at any time pleasure shows itself to you, have a care of being vanquished by its blandishments, sweetnesss, and its enchantments, but oppose to it the joy you will receive from the consciousness of a victory over your passions.

CHAP. LVII.

When you have resolved upon any undertaking, do not be ashamed to be seen doing it, although the world should judge otherwise of it than you do. If the thing is in itself evil, avoid an ill action because it is ill. But if a good one, why should you be afraid of being accused without reason ?

CHAP. LVIII.

As to say it is day, or it is night, at different times, is sense ; but to say at one time, it is both day and night, is nonsense : so it is a contradiction for a man to think to please his own appetite by snatching whatever is set before him, and at the same time be agreeable to the rest of those invited at an entertainment. Remember, therefore, when you are at any feast, not to look upon the dishes, as they are pleasant to your taste ; but that in helping yourself there is a decency to be preserved, and a respect due both to the inviter and the rest of the company.

CHAP. LIX.

If you emulate a man of greater merit than yourself, you will succeed ill in that, and also lose the merit of those excellencies you might be able to attain.

CHAP. LX.

As in walking, you take care lest you set your foot upon a stump, and strain your ankle : beware, in the course of your life, you hurt not your mind ; the governor of your actions, which, if we observe diligently, we shall undertake everything cautiously.

CHAP. LXI.

Your expenses ought to be as well proportioned to your necessity, as your shoe to your foot. If you keep to that rule, it will be a moderate measure ; if you go beyond it, you certainly fall down a precipice ; in your very shoe, if you wilfully exceed what is necessary, you will then have a gold one, after that it must be the Tyrian dye, and at length embroidery. There is no end of his extravagancy who once passes the bounds of reason.

CHAP. LXII.

Women, after fourteen, are presently called mistresses ; afterwards, when they see themselves without any place or employment, except they are married, they begin to dress, and place all their hope in outward ornament. A man ought therefore to do his

endeavours to show them they have but one way to be honoured, to behave themselves modestly, soberly, and chastely.

CHAP. LXIII.

It is the sign of a low genius to be very much concerned, or long in doing the necessary actions of ordinary life, either to sustain or delight their bodies; all these things are to be done slightly, and only because they must; the chief care and business is to be transferred to the soul.

CHAP. LXIV.

When any one does you an ill office, or speaks ill of you, remember that he thinks himself in the right in so doing or saying, and it is not to be expected he should act according to your opinion, but his own. If he judges wrong, the injury is his, who is deceived. If appearances are at any time deceitful, or truth obscured, so as to be taken for a falsehood, the truth is not hurt by it, but he is injured who is mistaken: being instructed in this, you will bear slander with an even mind, and when you hear any reflection made on you, you will answer—so it appeared to the reflector.

CHAP. LXV.

Everything has two handles, the one tolerable, the other intolerable: if your brother does you an injury, think not of the injury, for that is intolerable; but think he is your brother, and educated along with you, and that is taking it the best way.

CHAP. LXVI.

These conclusions are not just: I am thy superior in wealth, therefore thy superior in merit; I am more eloquent, therefore more deserving; but it is right to say, I am richer, and therefore my money is more than yours; I speak better, and therefore my language is purer. But neither your wealth, or eloquence, can render you better or more estimable.

CHAP. LXVII.

If any one go early to the bath, say not, he does ill to go early; say only, he did go there early. If any one drinks much wine, make no reflections when you say, he drinks much. The thing may not be evil, which you may rashly judge so. So you may disuse yourself from passing any judgment, till you are thoroughly acquainted with the motives of every action.

CHAP. LXVIII.

Never profess yourself a philosopher, nor dispute concerning maxims and precepts with the ignorant and simple; as at an entertainment, never preach how people ought to eat, but eat you as becomes you; and remember Socrates in this manner avoided all ostentation, for they came to him to show them to philosophers, and he carried them to them, so easily did he endure their contempt of his learning.

CHAP. LXIX.

If there happens amongst fools any dispute concerning learning, for the most part be silent. It is dangerous to speak what comes first into your mind. If any one calls you ignorant, be not moved at the reproach; and when you have learned this, then know you begin to be learned. A sheep does not show she has had a good pasture by throwing up the grass she has eaten, but when she has well digested it, and has wool and milk in plenty: do you in the same manner not boast your reading to fools, but show you have read and profited by the actions that follow a true improvement.

CHAP. LXX.

If you have learned to be moderate in your appetites and cares for what concerns your body, do not be pleased with yourself upon that account; if you drink only water, say not upon all occasions, you abstain from everything but water; if you inure yourself to labour, do it not publicly; if you forbear to drink when you thirst, forbearance is a virtue, but tell nobody of it.

CHAP. LXXI.

It is the mark of a thoughtless vulgar mind, to expect neither pleasure nor pain from anything but external things; but it is the express sign of a philosopher, to place all his grief and satisfaction within his own mind.

CHAP. LXXII.

These are the signs of a wise man: To reprove nobody, praise nobody, blame nobody, nor ever to speak of himself, as if he was some uncommon man, or knew more than the rest of the world. If he fails in anything, he accuses only himself; if any one praises him, in his own mind he contemns the flatterer; if any one re-proves him, he looks with care, that he may not be unsettled in that state of tranquillity he has entered into. All his desires

depend on things within his own power, he transfers all his aversion to those things Nature commands us to avoid. His appetites are always moderate; he is indifferent, whether he be thought foolish or ignorant. He observes himself with the nicety of an enemy or a spy, and looks on his own wishes as betrayers.

CHAP. LXXIII.

If you hear a man boast he understands and can explain the books of Chrysippus, say within yourself, if Chrysippus had not wrote obscurely, this man would have had nothing to boast of; but what do I study to know? Nature, and to follow her precepts. I seek, therefore, who is her interpreter; when I hear it is Chrysippus, I will consult him. But I do not understand his writings, I will therefore seek me a master; there is no great excellence in that, but when I have found an interpreter, it remains to obey his precepts, and that only is excellent. If I only admire the style and the interpretation, I do no otherwise than leave the place of a philosopher for a grammarian, excepting that instead of Homer, I translate Chrysippus. I ought rather to blush, when any one asks me if I have read Chrysippus, that I am not able to show them; yet my actions are agreeable to all his precepts.

CHAP. LXXIV.

Observe these rules, as if not to be violated without a punishment; neither care what judgment men pass on you, for what they shall say is not in your power to help.

CHAP. LXXV.

How long, I desire to know, will you defer the choice of those things you think most deserving, and cease violating the dictates of your own reason? You have heard the precepts you ought to embrace, and you have embraced them. What master do you yet expect, and for whose coming do you defer the amendment of your manners? You are no longer a youth, but are come to the mature age of a man. If you now grow neglectful and idle, you will put delay upon delay, add purpose to purpose, and put it off eternally from one day to another. Will you not consider you have learned nothing, and at this rate will both live and die a vulgar man? This minute, therefore, begin the life of a wise man, and one worthy of that name; and whatever seems best to your unprejudiced reason, make that an inviolable rule to you, whether it be

laborious, sweet, glorious, or infamous. Remember, the choice is to be now made, the combat is now beginning, neither is it permitted you to defer it; one hour of neglect will make all your virtue perish, or one firm resolution retain it for ever. So Socrates became what he was; in all things he carried himself agreeably to reason, and never hearkened to any other counsellor; and though as yet you are no Socrates, yet, if you are willing to become one, you must live in that manner.

CHAP. LXXVI.

The most necessary part of philosophy is the use of its maxims; as, for instance, not to lie: the second is the demonstration, Why should we not lie? The third is the confirmation, as, Why it is a demonstration? What is a demonstration? What a consequence? What a contradiction? What is truth? What is falsehood? The third depends upon the second, and the second upon the first, but it is most necessary to dwell upon the first. But our practice is different from this; we rest upon the third part, and there we employ our studies, neglecting the first altogether. While we can very readily demonstrate why we ought not to lie, we make no scruple of speaking falsehood.

CHAP. LXXVII.

In the beginning of every undertaking this ought to be our prayer: "Lead me, oh Jupiter, and thou Fate, wheresoever ye have destined me. I will cheerfully follow; if I refuse, it would be the part of an impious man, and notwithstanding I should follow."

CHAP. LXXVIII.

He is a wise man who submits himself to necessity, and is conscious of the Divine Providence.

CHAP. LXXIX.

And this, O Crito, is the wisest prayer: If so it seems best to the gods, so be it. Anglus and Melitus have the power to kill me, but they have not the power to hurt me.

ESSAYS.

A LETTER FROM THE OTHER WORLD, TO A LADY,
FROM HER FORMER HUSBAND.

THIS letter will surprise you less than it would any other of your sex; and therefore I think I need no apology in breaking through a rule of good-breeding, which has been observed so strictly by all husbands for so many ages; who, however troublesome while they lived, have never frightened their wives by the least notice of them after their deaths: but your reverend doctor will inform you, that there is nothing supernatural in this correspondence; and that the existence of immortal spirits includes a tender concern for the poor militant mortals of your world. I own I was a little puzzled how to convey this epistle, and thought it best to assume a material form some few moments, and put it myself into the penny-post. In my hurry (being very impatient to let you hear from me) I unluckily forgot my little finger, which produced an odd accident; for the wench at the post-office would have taken me up for one of the incendiaries. Already had the mob assembled round the door, and nothing but dissolving into air could have saved me from Newgate. Several ran down the alleys in pursuit of me; and particular care was taken of my letter, in hopes of reading it in the newspaper. You may imagine I would not have exposed myself to this adventure, but out of the sincerest regard to the happiness of the dear partner of my worldly cares. Without the least uneasiness I have seen you dispose of yourself into the arms of another; and I would never disturb you while you were seeking pleasure in forgetting me; but I cannot bear that you should constrain yourself out of respect to me. I see every motion of your mind now much clearer than I did in

my life (though then I guessed pretty shrewdly sometimes). I know the real content that you find in coloured riband, and am sensible how much you sacrifice to imaginary decency every time you put on that odious rusty black, which is half worn out. Alas! my dear Eliza, in these seats of perfect love and beauty, the veriest scrub of a cherubim (some of which have raked cinders behind Montagu House, as they often tell me) is more charming than you were on your first wedding-day. Judge, then, whether I can have any satisfaction in looking at your crape hood when I am in this bright company. You know that, in my terrestrial state, three bottles would sometimes raise me to that pitch of philosophy, I utterly forgot you, when you were but some few inches from me. Do not fancy me grown so impertinent here, as to observe so nicely whether you obey the forms of widowhood; and do not think to cajole me with such instances of your affection, when you are giving the most substantial proofs of it to another man. I have already assured you I am exalted above jealousy, if I could have been sensible of it. You have provoked me by a second choice, so absolutely opposite to your first. He is often talking of certain fellows he calls Classic Authors, who I never trouble my head with: and I know this letter will meet with more regard from him than from you; for he is better skilled in the language of the dead than the living.

IN A PAPER CALLED THE NONSENSE OF COMMON SENSE.

PUBLISHED JANUARY 24, 1738.¹

I HAVE always, as I have already declared, professed myself a friend, though I do not aspire to the character of an admirer, of the fair sex; and as such, I am warmed with indignation at the barbarous treatment they have received from the *Common Sense* of *January* 14, and the false advice that he gives them. He either knows them very little, or, like an interested quack, prescribes such medicines as are likely to hurt their constitutions. It is very plain to me, from the extreme partiality with which he speaks of *Operas*, and the rage with which he attacks both *Tragedy* and *Comedy*, that the author is a *Performer* in the *Opera*; and whoever

¹ "The Nonsense of Common Sense," an Essay paper, started about this time to counteract the paper called "Common Sense," which had attained some influence, was edited, and probably projected, by the celebrated General Oglethorpe. The only number which I have seen bears the eccentric notice: "To be continued as long as the author thinks fit and the public likes it." It had but a short run, and it is doubtful whether any complete copy is in existence.—T.

reads his paper with attention, will be of my opinion; else no *thing* alive would assert, at the same time, the innocence of an entertainment, contrived wholly to soften the mind and soothe the sense, without any pretence to a moral; and so vehemently declaim against plays, whose end is, to show the fatal consequences of vice, to warn the innocent against the snares of a well-bred designing *Dorimant*. You see there to what insults a woman of wit, beauty, and quality, is exposed, that has been seduced by the artificial tenderness of a vain agreeable gallant; and, I believe, that very comedy has given more checks to ladies in pursuit of present pleasures, so closely attended with shame and sorrow, than all the sermons they have ever heard in their lives. But this author does not seem to think it possible to stop their propensity to gallantry by reason or reflection. He only desires them to fill up their time with all sorts of trifles: in short, he recommends to them gossiping, scandal, lying, and a whole troop of follies, instead of it, as the only preservatives for their virtue.

I am for treating them with more dignity; and, as I profess myself a protector of all the oppressed, I shall look upon them as my peculiar care. I expect to be told this is downright *Quixotism*, and that I am venturing to engage the strongest part of mankind, with a paper helmet upon my head. I confess it is an undertaking where I cannot foresee any considerable success; and, according to an author I have read somewhere,

“ The world will still be ruled by knaves
And fools, contending to be slaves.”

But, however, I keep up the character of a moralist, and shall use my endeavours to relieve the distressed, and defeat vulgar prejudices, whatever the event may be. Among the most universal errors, I reckon that of treating the weaker sex with a contempt which has a very bad influence on their conduct. How many of them think it excuse enough to say they are women, to indulge any folly that comes into their heads! This renders them useless members of the commonwealth, and only burdensome to their own families, where the wise husband thinks he lessens the opinion of his own understanding, if he at any time condescends to consult his wife's. Thus, what reason nature has given them is thrown away, and a blind obedience expected from them by all their ill-natured masters; and, on the other side, as blind a complaisance shown by those that are indulgent, who say often, that women's

weakness must be complied with, and it is a vain troublesome attempt to make them hear reason.

I attribute a great part of this way of thinking, which is hardly ever controverted, either to the ignorance of authors, who are many of them heavy *collegians*, that have never been admitted to politer conversations than those of their *bed-makers*, or to the design of selling their works, which is generally the only view of writing, without any regard to truth, or the ill consequences that attend the propagation of wrong notions. A paper smartly wrote, though perhaps only some old conceits dressed in new words, either in rhyme or prose—I say *rhyme*, for I have seen no *verses* wrote for many years—such a paper, either to ridicule or declaim against the ladies, is very welcome to the coffee-houses, where there is hardly one man in ten but fancies he has some reason or other to curse some of the sex most heartily. Perhaps his sister's fortunes are to run away with the money that would be better bestowed at the Groom-porter's; or an old mother, good for nothing, keeps a jointure from a hopeful son, that wants to make a settlement on his mistress; or a handsome young fellow is plagued with a wife, that will remain alive, to hinder his running away with a great fortune, having two or three of them in love with him. These are serious misfortunes, that are sufficient to exasperate the mildest tempers to a contempt of the sex: not to speak of lesser inconveniences, which are very provoking at the time they are felt.

How many pretty gentlemen have been unmercifully jilted by pert hussies, after having curtsied to them at *half a dozen operas*; nay, permitted themselves to be led out *twice*; yet, after these encouragements, which amount very near to an engagement, have refused their *billets-doux*, and perhaps married other men, under their noses. How welcome is a couplet or two, in scorn of woman-kind, to such a disappointed lover; and with what comfort he reads, in many profound authors, that they are never to be pleased but by *coxcombs*; and, consequently, he owes his ill success to the brightness of his understanding, which is beyond female comprehension. The country squire is confirmed, in the elegant choice he has made, in preferring the conversation of his hounds to that of his wife; and the kind keepers, a numerous sect, find themselves justified in throwing away their time and estates on a parcel of jilts, when they read that neither birth nor education can make

any of the sex rational creatures; and they can have no value, but what is to be seen in their faces.

Hence springs the applause with which such libels are read; but I would ask the applauders, if these notions, in their own nature, are likely to produce any good effect towards reforming the *vicious*, instructing the weak, or guiding the young? I would not every day tell my footman, if I kept any, that their whole fraternity were a pack of scoundrels; that lying and stealing were inseparable qualities from their cloth; that I should think myself very happy in them, if they confined themselves to innocent lies, and would only steal candles' ends. On the contrary, I would say in their presence, that birth and money were accidents of fortune, that no man was to be seriously despised for wanting them; that an honest faithful servant was a character of more value than an insolent corrupt lord; that the real distinction between man and man lay in his integrity, which, in one shape or other, generally met with its reward in the world, and could not fail of giving the highest pleasure, by a consciousness of virtue, which every man feels that is so happy to possess it.

With this gentleness would I treat my inferiors, with much greater esteem would I speak to that beautiful half of mankind who are distinguished by *petticoats*. If I were a divine, I would remember, that in their first creation they were designed as a help for the other sex; and nothing was ever made incapable of the end of its creation. 'Tis true, the first lady had so little experience, that she hearkened to the persuasion of an impertinent dangler; and, if you mind, he succeeded, by persuading her she was not so wise as she should be.

Men that have not sense enough to show any superiority in their arguments, hope to be yielded to by a faith, that, as they are men, all the reason that has been allotted to human-kind has fallen to their share. I am seriously of another opinion. As much greatness of mind may be shown in submission as in command, and some women have suffered a life of hardships with as much philosophy as *Cato* traversed the deserts of *Africa*, and without that support the view of glory offered him, which is enough for the human mind that is touched with it, to go through any toil or danger. But this is not the situation of a woman whose virtue must only shine to her own recollection, and loses that name when

it is ostentatiously exposed to the world. A lady who has performed her duty as a daughter, a wife, and a mother, raises in me as much veneration as *Socrates* or *Xenophon*; and much more than I would pay either to *Julius Cæsar* or *Cardinal Mazarin*, though the first was the most famous enslaver of his country, and the last the most successful plunderer of his master.

A woman really virtuous, in the utmost extent of this expression, has virtue of a purer kind than any philosopher has ever shown; since she knows, if she has sense, and without it there can be no virtue, that mankind is too much prejudiced against her sex, to give her any degree of that fame which is so sharp a spur to their great actions. I have some thoughts of exhibiting a set of pictures of such meritorious ladies, where I shall say nothing of the fire of their eyes, or the pureness of their complexions, but give them such praises as befit a rational sensible being: virtues of choice, and not beauties of accident. I beg they would not so far mistake me, as to think I am undervaluing their charms: a beautiful mind, in a beautiful body, is one of the finest objects shown us by nature. I would not have them place so much value on a quality that can be only useful to one, as to neglect that which may be of benefit to thousands, by precept or by example. There will be no occasion of amusing them with trifles, when they consider themselves capable of not only making the most amiable, but the most estimable, figures in life. Begin, then, ladies, by paying those authors with scorn and contempt, who, with a sneer of affected admiration, would throw you below the dignity of the human species.

CARABOSSE.

A L'ABBÉ CONTI.

IL y avoit autrefois un Prince et une Princesse (car c'est ainsi que ma nourrice commençoit tous les contes dont elle me berçoit). Le Prince étoit brave et généreux, la Princesse belle et sage : leurs vertus, et leur amour réciproque et constant, faisoient tout à la fois la gloire et la honte du siècle. Mais comme il n'y a point de félicité parfaite, il leur manquoit des enfans : les temples de tous les dieux étoient chargés de leurs offrandes, et toutes les bonnes fées des environs de leurs présents, pour obtenir la seule chose qu'ils avoient à souhaiter. Il est vrai qu'on ne put jamais persuader à la Princesse de rechercher les mauvaises, et c'étoit en vain que le Prince lui représentoit que les méchantes pouvoient nuire avec autant de facilité que les bienfaisantes pouvoient servir ; elle disoit toujours que faire la cour aux vicieux, étoit une espèce de culte rendue au vice, et elle ne pouvoit pas s'y résoudre. On dit même qu'elle s'émancipoit quelquefois à blâmer leur conduite d'une façon un peu téméraire. Enfin ses vœux furent comblés : elle devint grosse. Elle n'oublia pas de prier à ses couches toutes les fées de ses amies, et elle leur préparoit des présents dignes de leur estre offerts. Donner des pierreries ou de l'or aux maîtresses des mines, auroit été leur faire un affront : elle sçavoit qu'elles en font si peu de cas, qu'elles en comblent souvent les mortels les plus indignes pour en mieux marquer leur mépris. Elle avoit ramassé par les soins infinis de beaux vers passionnés composés par des amants sincères, le portrait d'une belle religieuse qui n'avoit jamais pensé à l'amour profane, une phiole (très petite à la vérité) des larmes versées par une jeune et riche veuve seule dans son cabinet, et des livres de théologie qui n'avoient jamais ennuyé personne. Les fées étoient toutes étonnées d'où elle auroit pu trouver tant de choses rares et précieuses ; elles étoient empressées de témoigner leur reconnoissance en rendant son enfant la personne du monde la plus accomplie et la plus heureuse. Elle mit au monde une petite Princesse : à peine avoit-elle vu la lumière que la fée Bel-linde s'écria, Je la doue d'une beauté noble et touchante. Elle n'avoit pas cessé de parler quand on entendoit un bruit comme de

cent canons déchargés à la fois, un sifflement comme de mille serpents furieux, et on vit descendre par la cheminée la fée Carabosse, montée à califourchon sur un énorme crapaud. Je ne veux salir mon papier par la description de sa figure, faite pour inspirer le dégoût et l'horreur. Je veux (crioit-elle d'une voix rauque) que cette fille chérie perde cette beauté admirable par la petite vérole dans l'âge qu'elle commence à sentir ses avantages. La fée Spirituelle, se flattant d'adoucir ce malheur, disoit, Je la doue d'une mémoire la plus heureuse qui ait jamais été, d'un goût juste, d'une vivacité surprenante, tempérée par un jugement qui réglera toutes ses paroles : elle excellera dans tous les genres d'écrire ; elle sera sçavante sans vanité, et vive sans étourderie. Ce bel esprit (répliqua Carabosse avec un souris dédaigneux) ne servira qu'à lui attirer les ennemis ; elle seroit toujours en proie aux sots, déchirée par leurs malices, et importunée par leurs assiduités. Je veux, disoit la brillante Argentine en s'avancant, que son père soit le plus riche seigneur de son rang, et que son mari ait des millions d'or. Oui, interrompit Carabosse, elle vivra au milieu des trésors sans en voir jamais à sa disposition. Je lui donne, disoit Hygeia, une santé à toute épreuve, que ni les chagrins ni les fatigues ne pourront diminuer. Cette santé, répondit Carabosse, lui inspirera la hardiesse de tenter des entreprises téméraires, et de risquer des dangers dont elle seroit toujours environnée. Elle aura, disoit l'aimable Harmonie, l'oreille juste et un goût exquis pour la musique—— Je lui os te (crioit Carabosse en lui coupant la parole, le pouvoir de chanter, pour qu'elle sente toute la rage du désir et de l'impuissance. Les bonnes fées, consternées de voir leurs bénédictions ainsi empoisonnées, se parloient tout bas, et consultoient en quelle manière on pouvoit vaincre cette malice infernale. Spirituelle crut avoir trouvé un expédient infailible : Il faut lui oster (disoit-elle) tous les vices, et elle se trouvera garantie des malheurs qui en sont la suite. Je lui oste (ajouta-t-elle d'un ton haut et ferme) toutes les semences de l'envie et de l'avarice, qui sont les sources des misères de l'humanité ; elle aura l'humeur douce et égale—— Et un grand fonds de tendresse, s'écria Carabosse avec un éclat de rire qui faisoit trembler le palais.—Les fées bienfaisantes s'envolèrent, ne voyant aucun remède à tant de maux. La Princesse mourut de chagrin, son enfant s'embellissoit chaque jour ; mais [Ici le manuscrit est défectueux.]

SUR LA MAXIME DE M. DE ROCHEFOUCAULT,

QU'IL Y A DES MARIAGES COMMODES,

MAIS POINT DE DÉLICIEUX.¹

IL paroist bien hardi d'entreprendre de détruire une maxime établie par un bel esprit si célèbre que Mr. de Rochefoucault, et receue avec une joye si aveugle chez une nation qui se dit la seule parfaitement polie du monde, et qui a donné depuis si long temps des loix de galanterie à toute l'Europe.

Cependant (pleine de l'ardeur qu'inspire la vérité) j'ose avancer tout le contraire, et je soutiens hardiment, qu'il n'y a qu'un amour marié qui peut être délicieux pour une âme bien faite.

La nature nous a présenté des plaisirs propres pour notre espèce ; on n'a qu'à suivre son instinct raffiné par le goût, et relevé par une imagination vive et douce, pour trouver le seul bonheur dont les mortels sont capables. L'ambition, l'avarice, la vanité, ne peuvent donner (dans leurs plus grandes jouissances) que des plaisirs bas, médiocres, et qui ne sont pas capables de toucher un cœur noble.

On peut regarder les bienfaits de la fortune comme des échafauts nécessaires pour monter au bonheur ; mais on ne peut jamais le trouver, soit en y bornant ses souhaits, soit en obtenant ses frivoles faveurs, qui ne sont que les gênes de la vie, quand on les regarde comme [des ?] pas nécessaires pour obtenir ou conserver une félicité plus précieuse. Cette félicité ne se trouve que dans l'amitié fondée sur une estime parfaite fixée par la reconnoissance, soutenue par l'inclination, et éveillée par la tendresse de l'amour, que les anciens ont très bien dépeint sous la figure d'un bel enfant : il se plaît dans les jeux enfantins, il est tendre et délicat, incapable de nuire, charmé des bagatelles ; tous ses desseins se terminent

¹ "I am extremely obliged to Lady Mary Wortley for allowing me the sight of her charming essay. . . . I own it gives me great pleasure to find a person with more wit than Rochefoucauld himself undertake to confute any of his Maxims."—*Countess of Hertford to Countess of Pomfret*, Oct. 8, O.S., 1740.—T.

en des plaisirs, mais ces plaisirs sont doux et innocents. On a représenté, sous une figure bien différente, une autre passion trop grosse pour nommer (mais dont la plupart d'hommes sont seulement capables). Je veux dire celle d'un satyre, qui est plus bestial qu'humain, et on a exprimé dans cet animal équivoque le vice et la brutalité de cet appétit sensuel, qui est cependant le vrai fondement de tous les beaux procédés de la belle galanterie. Une passion qui tâche de s'assouvir dans la perte de ce qu'elle trouve de plus aimable au monde, qui est fondée sur l'injustice, soutenue par la tromperie, et suivie des crimes, du remords, de la honte, et du mépris, peut-elle être délicieuse pour un cœur vertueux ? Voilà pourtant l'aimable équipage de tous les engagements illégitimes : on se trouve obligé d'arracher de l'âme tous les sentimens de l'honneur inséparable d'une éducation noble, et de vivre misérable dans la poursuite éternelle de ce qu'on condamne ; d'avoir tous ses plaisirs empoisonnés de remords, et d'être réduit à cet état malheureux de renoncer à la vertu sans pouvoir se plaire dans le vice.

On ne peut goûter les douceurs d'un amour parfait que dans un mariage bien assorti : rien ne marque tant de petitesse dans l'esprit, que de s'arrêter aux paroles. Qu'importe que la coutume (pour laquelle nous voions d'assez bonnes raisons) ait donné un peu de ridicule à ces paroles de mari et de femme ? Un mari signifie (dans l'interprétation générale) un jaloux, brutal, grondeur, tyran, ou bien un bon sot à qui on peut tout imposer : une femme est un démon domestique, qu'on donne pour tromper ou pour tourmenter ce pauvre homme. La conduite de la plupart des gens justifie assez ces deux caractères ; mais encore, qu'importent des paroles ? Un mariage bien réglé ne ressemble pas à ces mariages d'intérêt ou d'ambition ; ce sont deux amants qui vivent ensemble ; qu'un prestre dit de certaines paroles, qu'un notaire signe de certains papiers, je regarde ces préparatifs dans la même vue qu'un amant l'échelle de corde qu'il attache à la fenestre de sa maîtresse. Pourvu qu'on vive ensemble, qu'importe à quel prix et par quels moïens ?

Il est impossible qu'un amour parfait et bien fondé soit heureux que dans la paisible possession de l'objet aimé, et cette paix n'oste rien de la douceur ni de la vivacité d'une passion telle que je sçais l'imaginer. Si je voulois m'occuper à faire des romans, je ne

voudrois pas placer les images du vrai bonheur dans l'Arcadie, ni sur les bords de Lignon ; je ne suis pas assez précieuse pour borner la plus délicate tendresse à des souhaits. Je commencerois le roman par le mariage de deux personnes unies par l'esprit, par le goût, et par l'inclination. Se peut-il donc rien de plus heureux que d'unir leurs intérêts et leurs jours ? L'Amant a le plaisir de donner la dernière marque d'estime et de confiance à sa maîtresse, et l'Amante lui donne en récompense le soin de son repos et de sa liberté. Peut-on se donner des gages plus chers ou plus tendres ? et n'est-il pas naturel de souhaiter de donner des preuves incontestables d'une tendresse dont l'âme est pénétrée ?

Je sçais qu'il y a de faux délicats, qui soutiennent que les plaisirs de l'amour ne sont dûs qu'aux difficultés et aux dangers. Ils disent fort spirituellement que la rose ne seroit pas rose sans épines, et mille fadaises de cette nature, qui font si peu d'impression sur mon esprit, que je suis persuadée, que si j'étois Amant, la crainte de nuire à celle que j'aimerois me rendroit malheureux, si sa possession même étoit accompagnée de dangers pour elle.

La vie des Amants mariés est bien différente ; ils ont le plaisir de la passer dans une suite d'obligations mutuelles et de marques de bienveillance, et on a la joye de voir qu'on fait le bonheur entier de l'objet aimé, en quel point je place la jouissance parfaite.

Les plus petits soins de l'économie deviennent nobles et délicats, quand ils sont relevés par des sentiments de tendresse. Meubler une chambre, n'est pas meubler une chambre—c'est orner un lieu où j'attends mon Amant ; ordonner un souper, n'est pas simplement donner des ordres à mon cuisinier—c'est m'amuser à régaler celui que j'aime : ces occupations nécessaires, regardées dans cette vue par une personne amoureuse, sont des plaisirs mille fois plus vifs et plus touchants que les spectacles et le jeu, qui font le bonheur de cette foule incapable de la vraie volupté. Une passion heureuse et contente adoucit tous les mouvements de l'âme, et dore tous les objets qu'on voit. Un Amant heureux (j'entends marié à sa maîtresse), s'il exerce une charge, les fatigues d'un camp, l'embarras d'une cour, tout lui devient agréable, quand c'est pour servir celle qu'il aime. Si la fortune favorable (car cela ne dépend

nullement du mérite) fait réussir ses desseins, tous les avantages qu'elle lui donne sont des offrandes qu'il met aux pieds de sa charmante amie; il la remercie de l'inspiration qu'il doit à ses charmes, et il trouve dans le succès de son ambition un plaisir plus vif, et plus digne d'un honnête homme, que celui d'élever sa fortune, et d'être applaudi du public. Il ne jouit de la gloire, du rang, et de la richesse, que par rapport à celle qu'il aime; et c'est son amante qu'il entend louer, quand il s'attire l'approbation d'un parlement, l'applaudissement d'une armée, ou l'agrément de son prince. Dans le malheur c'est sa consolation de se retirer auprès d'une personne attendrie par ses disgraces, et de se dire entre ses bras, Mon bonheur ne dépend pas de la¹ caprice de la fortune; ici j'ai un asile assuré contre les chagrins; votre estime me rend insensible à l'injustice d'une cour, ou à l'ingratitude d'un maître, et j'ai une espèce de plaisir dans la perte de mon bien, puisque cette infortune me donne de nouvelles preuves de votre tendresse. A quoi servent les grandeurs à des personnes déjà heureuses? Nous n'avons besoin ni de flatteurs ni d'équipages; je règne dans votre cœur, et je possède toutes les délices de la nature dans votre personne.

Enfin, il n'y a point de situation dont la tristesse n'est pas capable d'être diminuée par la compagnie de l'objet de son amour; une maladie même n'est pas sans douceurs, quand on a le plaisir d'être soigné par celle qu'on aime. Je ne finirois jamais, si j'entreprendois de donner un détail de tous les agréments d'une union où l'on trouve à la fois tout ce qui peut satisfaire une imagination tendre et délicate, et tout ce qui flatte les sens dans la volupté la plus pure et la plus étendue; mais je ne sçaurois finir sans parler du plaisir de voir croître, tous les jours, les aimables marques d'une tendre amitié, et de s'occuper (selon leurs différents sexes) à les perfectionner. On s'abandonne à ce doux instinct de la nature, raffiné par l'amour. On baise dans une fille la beauté de sa mère, et on respecte dans un fils l'esprit et les apparences d'une probité naturelle qu'on estime dans son père. C'est un plaisir auquel Dieu même (à ce que dit Moïse) a été sensible, quand voiant ce

¹ The false concords and other violations of grammatical propriety in these Essays in French were probably found in the original manuscript, which I have not seen. Similar errors are still more abundant in other specimens of Lady Mary's French which I have found among her papers. It may be said in her defence that even the writings of French ladies not deemed illiterate were at this period rarely free from such defects.—T.

qu'il avoit fait, il le trouvoit bon. A propos de Moïse, le premier plan du bonheur a infiniment surpassé tous les autres, et je ne sçaurois former d'idée d'un Paradis plus Paradis que l'état où étoient placés nos premiers parens. Cela n'a pas duré, parce qu'ils ne connoissoient pas le monde ; et c'est par la mesme raison qu'on voit si peu de mariages d'inclination heureux. Eve étoit une sotte enfant, et Adam un homme fort peu éclairé : quand des gens de cette espèce se rencontrent, ils ont beau estre amoureux, cela ne peut pas durer. Ils se forment pendant la fureur de leur amour des idées surnaturelles ; un homme croit sa maîtresse une ange parce qu'elle est belle, et une femme est enchantée du mérite de son amant parce qu'il l'adore. Le premier changement de son teint lui oste son adoration, et le mari cessant d'être adorateur, devient haïssable à celle qui n'a pas eu d'autre fondement de son amour. Ils se dégoûtent peu à peu, et à l'exemple de nos premiers parens, ils ne manquent pas de rejeter l'un sur l'autre le crime de leur mutuelle foiblesse. Après la froideur, le mépris marche à grands pas, et ils sont prévenus qu'il faut se haïr puisqu'ils sont mariés. Leurs moindres défauts se grossissent à leur vue, et ils sont aveugles sur les agréments qui pourroient leur toucher en toute autre personne. Un commerce établi sur l'usage du sens ne peut pas avoir d'autre suite. Un homme en épousant sa maîtresse doit oublier qu'elle lui paroist adorable, pour considérer que c'est une simple mortelle sujette aux maladies, aux caprices, et à la mauvaise humeur : il doit préparer sa constance à soutenir la perte de sa beauté, et amasser un fonds de complaisance, qui est nécessaire pour la conversation continuelle de la personne du monde la plus raisonnable et la moins inégale. La dame, de son côté, ne doit pas attendre une suite de flatteries et d'obéissance ; elle se doit disposer elle-même à obéir agréablement—science très difficile, et par conséquence d'un grand mérite auprès d'un homme capable de le sentir. Elle doit tâcher de relever les charmes d'une maîtresse par le bon sens et la solidité d'une amie. Quand deux personnes préoccupées par des sentimens si raisonnables sont unies par des liens éternels, la nature entière leur rit, et les objets les plus communs leur deviennent charmants. Il me semble que c'est une vie infiniment plus douce, plus élégante, et plus voluptueuse, que la galauterie la plus heureuse et la mieux conduite. Une femme capable de réflexion ne peut regarder un amant autre-

ment qu'un séducteur, qui veut profiter de sa foiblesse pour se donner un plaisir d'un moment, aux dépens de sa gloire, de son repos, et peut-être de sa vie. Un voleur qui met le pistolet à la gorge pour enlever une bourse me paroist plus honnête, et moins coupable ; et j'ai assez bonne opinion de moi pour croire que si j'étois homme, je serois aussi capable de former le plan d'un assassinat, que celui de corrompre une honnête femme, estimée dans le monde et heureuse dans son ménage. Serois-je capable d'empoisonner son cœur en lui inspirant une passion funeste, à laquelle il faut immoler l'honneur, la tranquillité, et la vertu ? Rendrois-je méprisable une personne parce qu'elle me paroist aimable ? Dois-je récompenser sa tendresse en lui rendant sa maison en horreur, ses enfants indifférents, et son mari détesté ? Je crois que ces réflexions me paroistroient dans la même force si mon sexe m'avoit rendue excusable dans de pareils procédés, et j'espère que j'aurois été assez sensée pour ne pas croire le vice moins vicieux parce qu'il est à la mode.

J'estime beaucoup les mœurs Turques (peuple ignorant, mais très poli à ma fantaisie). Un galant convaincu d'avoir débauché une femme mariée est regardé parmi eux avec la même horreur qu'une dame abandonnée chez nous. Il est sûr de ne jamais faire fortune, et on auroit honte de donner une charge considérable à un homme soupçonné d'avoir fait une injustice si énorme. Que diroit-on dans cette nation morale si on voyoit quelques-uns de nos anti-chevaliers-errans, qui sont toujours en poursuite d'aventures pour mettre des filles innocentes en détresse et pour perdre l'honneur des femmes de condition, qui ne regardent la beauté, la jeunesse, le rang, et la vertu même, que comme des aiguillons pour exciter le désir de les ruiner, et qui mettent toute leur gloire à paroistre des séducteurs habiles ; oubliant qu'avec tous leurs soins ils ne peuvent jamais atteindre qu'au second rang de ce bel escadron, les diables ayant été depuis si long-temps en possession du premier ? J'avoue que nos manières barbares sont si bien calculées pour l'établissement du vice et du malheur (qui en est inséparable), qu'il faut avoir des têtes et des cœurs infiniment au-dessus du commun pour pouvoir jouir de la félicité d'un mariage tel que je viens de le dépeindre. La nature est si foible et si portée au changement, qu'il est difficile de soutenir la constance la mieux fondée parmi toutes les dissipations que nos coùtumes

ridicules ont rendu inévitables. Un mariam oureux a peine à voir prendre à sa femme toutes les libertés du bel usage : il paroist y avoir de la dureté à les refuser : et il se trouve réduit, pour se conformer aux manières polies de l'Europe, de voir tous les jours ses mains en proye à qui les veut prendre, de l'entendre partager à toute la terre les charmes de son esprit, la voir montrer sa gorge en plein midi, se parer pour des bals et des spectacles, s'attirer des adorateurs, et écouter les fades flatteries de mille et mille sots. Peut-on soutenir son estime pour une créature si publique ? et ne perd-elle pas (au moins) beaucoup de son prix ? Je reviens toujours à mes manières Orientales, où les plus belles femmes se contentent de limiter le pouvoir de leurs charmes à celui à qui il est permis d'en jouir : elles ont trop d'humanité pour souhaiter de faire des misérables, et elles sont trop sincères pour ne pas avouer qu'elles se croient capables d'exciter des passions.

Je me souviens d'une conversation que j'ai eue avec une dame de grande qualité à Constantinople (la plus aimable femme que j'ai connue de ma vie, et pour qui j'ai eue ensuite une tendre amitié) : elle m'avoua naïvement qu'elle étoit contente de son mari. Que vous êtes libertines (me disoit-elle), vous autres dames Chrétiennes ! il vous est permis de recevoir les visites d'autant d'hommes que vous voulez, et vos loix vous permettent sans bornes l'usage de l'amour et du vin. Je l'assurai qu'elle étoit fort mal instruite ; qu'il étoit vrai que nous recevions des visites, mais ces visites étoient pleines du respect et du retenu, et que c'étoit un crime d'entendre parler d'amour, ou d'aimer un autre que son mari. Vos maris sont bien bons (me répliqua-t-elle en riant) de se contenter d'une fidélité si bornée : vos yeux, vos mains, votre conversation est pour le public, et que prétendez-vous réserver pour eux ? Pardonnez-moi, ma belle Sultane (ajouta-t-elle en m'embrassant), j'ai toute l'inclination possible de croire tout ce que vous me dites, mais vous voulez m'imposer des impossibilités. Je sçai les saletés des infidelles ; je voye que vous en avez honte, et je ne vous en parlerai plus.

J'ai trouvé tant de bon sens et de vraisemblance en tout ce qu'elle me disoit, que j'avois peine à la contredire ; et j'avouai d'abord qu'elle avoit raison de préférer les mœurs Musulmanes à nos coûtes ridicules, qui sont une confusion surprenante des

maximes sévères de la Christianisme avec tout le libertinage des Lacédémoniennes : et nonobstant nos folles manières, je suis du sentiment qu'une femme déterminée à faire son bonheur de l'amour de son mari, doit abandonner le désir extravagant de se faire adorer du public ; et qu'un mari qui aime tendrement sa femme, doit se priver de la réputation d'être galant à la cour. Vous voyez que je suppose deux personnes bien extraordinaires : il n'est pas donc for surprenant qu'une telle union soit bien rare dans les païs où il nécessaire de mépriser les coûtumes les plus établies pour être heureux.

P O E M S.

JULIA TO OVID.

Written at Twelve Years of Age, in imitation of Ovid's Epistles.

ARE love and power incapable to meet ?
And must they all be wretched who are great ?
Enslav'd by titles, and by forms confin'd,
For wretched victims to the state design'd.

What rural maid, that my sad fortune knows,
Would quit her cottage to embrace my woes ?
Would be this cursed sacrifice to power,
'This wretched daughter of Rome's emperor ?
When sick with sighs to absent Ovid given,
I tire with vows the unrelenting Heaven,
Drown'd in my tears, and with my sorrows pale,
What then do all my kindred gods avail ?
Let proud Augustus the whole world subdue,
Be mine to place all happiness in you ;
With nobler pride I can on thrones look down,
Can court your love and can despise a crown,—

O Love ! thou pleasure never dearly bought !
Whose joys exceed the very lover's thought ;
Of that soft passion, when you teach the art,
In gentle sounds it steals into the heart ;
With such sweet magic does the soul surprise,
'Tis only taught us better by your eyes.

O Ovid ! first of the inspired train,
To Heaven I speak in that enchanting strain,
So sweet a voice can never plead in vain.

Apollo will protect his favourite son,
 And all the little Loves unto thy succour run.
 The Loves and Muses in thy prayer shall join,
 And all their wishes and their vows be thine ;
 Some god will soften my hard Father's breast,
 And work a miracle to make thee blest.

* * * * *

* * * * *

Hard as this is, I even this could bear,
 But greater ills than what I feel, I fear.
 My fame—my Ovid—both for ever fled,
 What greater evil is there left to dread !
 Yes, there is one
 Avert it, Gods, who do my sorrows see !
 Avert it, thou, who art a god to me !
 When back to Rome your wishing eyes are cast,
 And on the lessening towers you gaze your last—
 When fancy shall recal unto your view
 The pleasures now for ever lost to you,
 The shining court, and all the thousand ways
 To melt the nights and pass the happy days—
 Will you not sigh, and hate the wretched maid,
 Whose fatal love your safety has betray'd ?
 Say that from me your banishment does come,
 And curse the eyes that have expell'd you Rome ?
 Those eyes, which now are weeping for your woes,
 The sleep of death shall then for ever close.

IRREGULAR VERSES TO TRUTH.

Written at Fourteen Years of Age.

WHERE, lovely Goddess, dost thou dwell ?
 In what remote and silent shade ?
 Within what cave or lonely cell ?
 With what old hermit, or unpractis'd maid ?
 In vain I've sought thee all around,
 But thy unfashionable sound
 In crowds was never heard,
 Nor ever has thy form in town or court appear'd.

The sanctuary is not safe to thee,
 Chas'd thence by endless mystery ;
 Thy own professors chase thee thence,
 And wage eternal war with thee and sense ;
 Then in perplexing comments lost,
 E'en when they would be thought to show the most.
 Most beautiful when most distress'd,
 Descend, O Goddess, to my breast ;
 There thou may'st reign, unrivall'd and alone,
 My thoughts thy subjects, and my heart thy throne.

SONG.

How happy is the harden'd heart,
 Where interest is the only view !
 Can sigh and meet, or smile and part,
 Nor pleas'd, nor griev'd, nor false, nor true—
 Yet, have they truly peace of mind ?
 Or do they ever truly know
 The bliss sincerer tempers find,
 Which truth and virtue can bestow ?

THE LADY'S RESOLVE.

Written on a window, soon after her marriage, 1713.

WHILST thirst of praise and vain desire of fame,
 In every age, is every woman's aim ;
 With courtship pleas'd, of silly toasters proud,
 Fond of a train, and happy in a crowd ;
 On each proud fop bestowing some kind glance,
 Each conquest owing to some loose advance ;
 While vain coquets affect to be pursued,
 And think they're virtuous, if not grossly lewd :
 Let this great maxim be my virtue's guide ;
 In part she is to blame that has been try'd—
 He comes too near, that comes to be deny'd.¹

¹ Mr. Peter Cunningham, in a manuscript note, remarks that this very line occurs in Ben Jonson's conversation with Drummond.—T.

TOWN ECLOGUES.¹

Written in the Year 1715.

MONDAY.

ROXANA; OR, THE DRAWING-ROOM.

ROXANA,² from the court retiring late,
Sigh'd her soft sorrows at St. James's gate.

¹ Mr. Dallaway having found that Pope, in one of his letters to Lady Mary (see vol. i. p. 432), promises to conceal a manuscript copy of these Eclogues "from all profane eyes;" and believing that the whole of them were subsequently published by Curll, with Pope's connivance, has stated in his *Memoir of Lady Mary* that this was the cause which aggravated their dissension "into implacability." The statement is entirely founded in error. It is true that three of these Eclogues were published by Curll, through his fellow-bookseller Roberts; but this publication took place in March, 1716, before Lady Mary left England for Constantinople, and long before the date of the letter of Pope referred to. Lord Wharnccliffe gives the following title and preface from Roberts's edition:

COURT POEMS.

viz.

1. THE BASSET-TABLE, AN ECLOGUE.
2. THE DRAWING-ROOM.
3. THE TOILET.

PUBLISHED FAITHFULLY AS THEY WERE FOUND IN A POCKET-BOOK TAKEN UP IN
WESTMINSTER HALL, THE LAST DAY OF THE LORD WINTON'S TRIAL.

London: printed for J. Roberts, near the Oxford Arms, in Warwick-lane, 1706.
[1716.] Price Sixpence.

Then follows an

ADVERTISEMENT.

The reader is acquainted from the title-page how I came possessed of the following poems. All that I have to add, is only a word or two concerning their author. Upon reading them over at St. James's Coffee-house, they were attributed, by the general voice, to be the productions of a lady of quality. When I produced them at Button's, the poetical jury there brought in a different verdict; and the foreman strenuously insisted upon it, that Mr. Gay was the man, and declared, in comparing the Basset Table with that gentleman's Pastorals, he found the style and turn of thought to be evidently the same, which confirmed him, and his brethren, in the sentence they had pronounced. Not content with these two decisions, I was resolved to call in an umpire; and accordingly chose a gentleman of distinguished merit, who lives not far from Chelsea. I sent him the papers, which he returned to me the next day, with this answer:

"SIR,—Depend upon it, these lines could come from no other hand than the judicious translator of Homer."

Thus having impartially given the sentiments of the Town, I hope I may deserve thanks for the pains I have taken in endeavouring to find out the author of these valuable performances, and everybody is at liberty to bestow the laurel as they please.

Curll charged Pope with having attempted to poison him in revenge for this publication, which gave rise to the humorous "Account of a Horrid and Barbarous Revenge by Poison on the body of Mr. Edmund Curll, bookseller," which will be found among Pope's works. The remaining three Eclogues do not seem to have been published till 1747, when Horace Walpole, apparently without any authority, published them in 4to, with Lady Mary's initials.—T.

² Mary Finch, Duchess of Roxburg, a daughter of Daniel Earl of Nottingham.

Such heavy thoughts lay brooding in her breast,
 Not her own chairmen with more weight oppress'd;
 They groan the cruel load they're doom'd to bear;
 She in these gentle sounds express'd her care.

"Was it for this that I these roses wear?
 For this new-set the jewels for my hair?
 Ah! Princess!¹ with what zeal have I pursued!
 Almost forgot the duty of a prude.
 Thinking I never could attend too soon,
 I've miss'd my prayers, to get me dress'd by noon.
 For thee, ah! what for thee did I resign?
 My pleasures, passions, all that e'er was mine.
 I sacrific'd both modesty and ease,
 Left operas and went to filthy plays;
 Double-entendres shock my tender ear;
 Yet even this for thee I choose to bear.
 In glowing youth, when nature bids be gay,
 And every joy of life before me lay,
 By honour prompted, and by pride restrain'd,
 The pleasures of the young my soul disdain'd:
 Sermons I sought, and with a mien severe
 Censur'd my neighbours, and said daily pray'r.

"Alas! how chang'd—with the same sermon-mien
 That once I pray'd, the *What d'ye call 't*² I've seen.
 Ah! cruel Princess, for thy sake I've lost
 That reputation which so dear had cost:
 I, who avoided every public place,
 When bloom and beauty bade me show my face,
 Now near thee constant every night abide
 With never-failing duty by thy side;³
 Myself and daughters standing on a row,
 To all the foreigners a goodly show!
 Oft had your drawing-room been sadly thin,
 And merchants' wives close by the chair been seen,

She married, first, William Marquis of Halifax, and afterwards John first Duke of Roxburgh. See allusion to her, vol. i. p. 488.—T.

¹ The Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline.—D.

² A farce, by Gay.—D. First performed in February, 1715.—T.

³ This refers only to the duchess's assiduity in paying court. I do not find that she ever held any place about the princess.—T.

Had not I amply filled the empty space,
And saved your highness from the dire disgrace.

“ Yet Coquetilla’s¹ artifice prevails,
When all my merit and my duty fails ;
That Coquetilla, whose deluding airs
Corrupt our virgins, still our youth ensnares ;
So sunk her character, so lost her fame,
Scarce visited before your highness came :
Yet for the bed-chamber ’tis her you choose,
When zeal and fame and virtue you refuse.
Ah ! worthy choice ! not one of all your train
Whom censure blasts not, and dishonours stain !
Let the nice hind now suckle dirty pigs,
And the proud pea-hen hatch the cuckoo’s eggs !
Let Iris leave her paint and own her age,
And grave Suffolka² wed a giddy page !
A greater miracle is daily view’d,
A virtuous Princess with a court so lewd.

“ I know thee, court ! with all thy treach’rous wiles,
Thy false caresses and undoing smiles !
Ah ! Princess, learn’d in all the courtly arts,
To cheat our hopes, and yet to gain our hearts !

“ Large lovely bribes are the great statesman’s aim ;
And the neglected patriot follows fame.
The Prince is ogled ; some the King pursue ;
But your Roxana only follows you.
Despis’d Roxana, cease, and try to find
Some other, since the Princess proves unkind :
Perhaps it is not hard to find at court,
If not a greater, a more firm support.”

TUESDAY.—ST. JAMES’S COFFEE-HOUSE.

SILLIANDER AND PATCH.

THOU, who so many favours hast receiv’d,
Wond’rous to tell, and hard to be believ’d,

¹ Coquetilla, according to Horace Walpole, meant the Duchess of Shrewsbury. She was an Italian lady, a daughter of the Marquis Paleotti of Bologna, and was said to be a woman of violent temper. Her husband was Charles Talbot, the first Duke of Shrewsbury. She was appointed lady of the bedchamber to Caroline Princess of Wales in October, 1714.—T.

² This appears to refer to the same Lady Suffolk mentioned in one of the Letters during the Embassy (see vol. i. p. 244). ³ Who she was I am unable to ascertain.—T.

Oh! Hervey,¹ to my lays attention lend,
Hear how two lovers boastingly contend;
Like thee successful, such their bloomy youth,
Renown'd alike for gallantry and truth.

St. James's bell had toll'd some wretches in
(As tatter'd riding-hoods alone could sin),
The happier sinners now their charms recruit,
And to their manteaus their complexion suit;
The opera queens had finish'd half their faces,
And city dames already taken places;
Fops of all kinds, to see the Lion,² run;
The beauties stay till the first act's begun,
And beaux step home to put fresh linen on.
No well-dress'd youth in coffee-house remain'd
But pensive Patch, who on the window lean'd;
And Silliander, that, alert and gay,
First pick'd his teeth, and then began to say:

SILLIANDER.

Why all these sighs? ah! why so pensive grown?
Some cause there is why thus you sit alone.
Does hapless passion all this sorrow move?
Or dost thou envy where the ladies love?

PATCH.

If, whom they love, my envy must pursue,
'Tis true at least I never envy you.

SILLIANDER.

No, I'm unhappy—you are in the right—
'Tis you they favour, and 'tis me they slight.
Yet I could tell, but that I hate to boast,
A club of ladies where 'tis me they toast.

PATCH.

Toasting does seldom any favour prove;
Like us, they never toast the thing they love.
A certain duke one night my health begun;
With cheerful pledges round the room it run,
'Till the young Silvia, press'd to drink it too,
Started, and vow'd she knew not what to do:

¹ Lord Viscount Hervey.—D.

² See letter to Mrs. Hewet, vol. i. p. 151.

What, drink a fellow's health ! she died with shame
Yet blush'd whenever she pronounc'd my name.

SILLIANDER.

Ill fates pursue me, may I never find
The dice propitious, or the ladies kind,
If fair Miss Flippy's fan I did not tear,
And one from me she condescends to wear !

PATCH.

Women are always ready to receive ;
'Tis then a favour when the sex we give.
A lady (but she is too great to name),
Beauteous in person, spotless in her fame,
With gentle strugglings let me force this ring ;
Another day may give another thing.

SILLIANDER.

I could say something—see this billet-doux—
And as for presents—look upon my shoe—
These buckles were not forc'd, nor half a theft,
But a young countess fondly made the gift.

PATCH.

My countess is more nice, more artful too,
Affects to fly, that I may fierce pursue :
This snuff-box which I begg'd, she still deny'd,
And when I strove to snatch it, seem'd to hide ;
She laugh'd and fled, and as I sought to seize,
With affectation cramm'd it down her stays ;
Yet hop'd she did not place it there unseen,
I press'd her breasts, and pull'd it from between.

SILLIANDER.

Last night, as I stood ogling of her Grace,
Drinking delicious poison from her face,
The soft enchantress did that face decline,
Nor ever rais'd her eyes to meet with mine ;
With sudden art some secret did pretend,
Lean'd cross two chairs to whisper to a friend,
While the stiff whalebone with the motion rose,
And thousand beauties to my sight expose.

PATCH.

Early this morn—(but I was ask'd to come)
 I drank bohea in Celia's dressing-room :
 Warm from her bed, to me alone within,
 Her night-gown fasten'd with a single pin ;
 Her night-clothes tumbled with resistless grace,
 And her bright hair play'd careless round her face ;
 Reaching the kettle made her gown unpin,
 She wore no waistcoat, and her shift was thin.

SILLIANDER.

See Titiana driving to the park !
 Haste ! let us follow, 'tis not yet too dark :
 In her all beauties of the spring are seen,
 Her cheeks are rosy, and her mantle green.

PATCH.

See Tintoretta to the opera goes !
 Haste ! or the crowd will not permit our bows ;
 In her the glory of the heav'ns we view,
 Her eyes are star-like, and her mantle blue.

SILLIANDER.

What colour does in Celia's stockings shine ?
 Reveal that secret, and the prize is thine.

PATCH.

What are her garters ? Tell me, if you can ;
 I'll freely own thee far the happier man.

Thus Patch continued his heroic strain,
 While Silliander but contends in vain ;
 After a contest so important gain'd,
 Unrival'd Patch in every ruelle reign'd.

WEDNESDAY.—THE TÊTE-À-TÊTE.

DANCINDA.

“ No, fair Dancinda, no ; you strive in vain
 To calm my care, and mitigate my pain ;
 If all my sighs, my cares, can fail to move,
 Ah ! soothe me not with fruitless vows of love.”

Thus Strephon spoke. Dancinda thus replied;
"What must I do to gratify your pride?
Too well you know (ungrateful as thou art)
How much you triumph in this tender heart:
"What proof of love remains for me to grant?
Yet still you tease me with some new complaint.
Oh! would to heaven!—but the fond wish is vain—
Too many favours had not made it plain!
But such a passion breaks through all disguise,
Love reddens on my cheek, and wishes in my eyes.
Is't not enough (inhuman and unkind!)
I own the secret conflict of my mind?
You cannot know what secret pain I prove,
When I, with burning blushes, own I love.
You see my artless joy at your approach,
I sigh, I faint, I tremble at your touch;
And in your absence all the world I shun;
I hate mankind, and curse the cheering sun;
Still as I fly, ten thousand swains pursue;
Ten thousand swains I sacrifice to you.
I show you all my heart without disguise;
But these are tender proofs that you despise—
I see too well what wishes you pursue;
You would not only conquer, but undo:
You, cruel victor, weary of your flame,
Would seek a cure in my eternal shame;
And, not content my honour to subdue,
Now strive to triumph o'er my virtue too.
O Love! a god indeed to womankind,
Whose arrows burn me, and whose fetters bind,
Avenge thy altars, vindicate thy fame,
And blast these traitors that profane thy name
Who, by pretending to thy sacred fire,
Raise cursed trophies to impure desire.
"Have you forgot with what ensnaring art,
You first seduc'd this fond uncautious heart?
Then as I fled, did you not kneeling cry,
'Turn, cruel beauty; whither would you fly?
Why all these doubts? why this distrustful fear?
No impious wishes shall offend your ear:

Nor ever shall my boldest hopes pretend
 Above the title of a tender friend ;
 Blest, if my lovely goddess will permit
 My humble vows thus sighing at her feet.
 The tyrant, Love, that in my bosom reigns,
 The god himself submits to wear your chains ;
 You shall direct his course, his ardour tame,
 And check the fury of his wildest flame.'

" Unpractis'd youth is easily deceived ;
 Sooth'd by such sounds I listen'd and believ'd :
 Now quite forgot that soft submissive fear,
 You dare to ask what I must blush to hear.

" Could I forget the honour of my race,
 And meet your wishes, fearless of disgrace ;
 Could passion o'er my tender youth prevail,
 And all my mother's pious maxims fail ;
 Yet to preserve your heart (which still must be,
 False as it is, for ever dear to me)
 This fatal proof of love I would not give,
 Which you'd condemn the moment you receive.
 The wretched she, who yields to guilty joys,
 A man may pity, but he must despise.
 Your ardour ceas'd, I then should see you shun
 The wretched victim by your arts undone.
 Yet if I could that cold indifference bear,
 What more would strike me with the last despair,
 With this reflection would my soul be torn,
 To know I merited your cruel scorn.

" Has love no pleasures free from guilt or fear ?
 Pleasures less fierce, more lasting, more sincere ?
 Thus let us gently kiss and fondly gaze ;
 Love is a child, and like a child he plays.

" O Strephon ! if you would continue just,
 If love be something more than brutal lust,
 Forbear to ask what I must still deny,
 This bitter pleasure, this destructive joy,
 So closely follow'd by the dismal train
 Of cutting shame, and guilt's heart-piercing pain."

She paus'd, and fix'd her eyes upon her fan !
 He took a pinch of snuff, and thus began :

"Madam, if love——" But he could say no more,
 For Mademoiselle came rapping at the door.
 The dangerous moments no adieus afford :
 —"Begone," she cries, "I'm sure I hear my lord."
 The lover starts from his unfinish'd loves,
 To snatch his hat, and seek his scatter'd gloves :
 The sighing dame to meet her dear prepares,
 While Strephon, cursing, slips down the back stairs.

THURSDAY.—THE BASSETTE-TABLE.

SMILINDA AND CARDELIA.

CARDELIA.

THE *Bassette-Table* spread, the Tallier come ;
 Why stays Smilinda in her dressing-room ?
 Rise, pensive nymph ! the Tallier waits for you.

SMILINDA.

Ah ! madam, since my Sharper is untrue,
 I joyless make my once ador'd *alpiu*.
 I saw him stand behind Ombrelia's chair,
 And whisper with that soft deluding air,
 And those feign'd sighs, which cheat the list'ning fair.

CARDELIA.

Is this the cause of your romantic strains ?
 A mightier grief my heavier heart sustains.
 As you by Love, so I by Fortune cross'd,
 In one bad *deal* three *septlevas* have lost.

SMILINDA.

Is that the grief which you compare with mine !
 With ease the smiles of Fortune I resign :
 Would all my gold in one bad *deal* were gone ;
 Were lovely Sharper mine, and mine alone !

CARDELIA.

A lover lost is but a common care :
 And prudent nymphs against that change prepare.
 The knave of clubs thrice lost : oh ! who could guess
 This fatal stroke ! this unforeseen distress ?

SMILINDA.

See ! Betty Loveit, very *à propos*,
 She all the care of *love* and *play* does know ;
 Dear Betty shall th' important point decide ;
 Betty, who oft the pain of each has try'd ;
 Impartial she shall say who suffers most,
 By *cards' ill usage*, or by *lovers lost*.

LOVEIT.

Tell, tell your griefs ; attentive will I stay,
 Though time is precious, and I want some tea.

CARDELIA.

Behold this *equipage*, by Mathers wrought,
 With fifty guineas (a great penn'orth !) bought.
 See on the toothpick, Mars and Cupid strive ;
 And both the struggling figures seem alive.
 Upon the bottom shines the queen's bright face ;
 A myrtle foliage round the thimble case.
 Jove, Jove himself, does on the scissors shine ;
 The metal, and the workmanship divine !

SMILINDA.

This *snuff-box*, once the pledge of Sharper's love,
 When rival beauties for the present strove ;
 At Corticelli's he the raffle won ;
 Then first his passion was in public shown :
 Hazardia blush'd, and turn'd her head aside,
 A rival's envy (all in vain) to hide.
 This *snuff-box*—on the hinge see brilliants shine :
 This *snuff-box* will I stake, the prize is mine.

CARDELIA.

Alas ! far lesser losses than I bear,
 Have made a soldier sigh, a lover swear,
 And, oh ! what makes the disappointment hard,
 'Twas my own lord that drew the fatal card.
 In complaisance I took the *queen* he gave,
 Though my own secret wish was for the knave.
 The *knave* won Sonica which I had chose ;
 And the next *pull* my *septleva* I lose.

SMILINDA.

But, ah! what aggravates the killing smart,
 The cruel thought that stabs me to the heart;
 This curs'd Umbrelia, this undoing fair,
 By whose vile arts this heavy grief I bear;
 She, at whose name I shed these spiteful tears,
 She owes to me the very charms she wears:
 An awkward thing when first she came to town;
 Her shape unfashion'd, and her face unknown:
 She was my friend, I taught her first to spread
 Upon her sallow cheeks enlivening red.
 I introduc'd her to the park and plays;
 And by my int'rest Cosins¹ made her stays.
 Ungrateful wretch! with mimic airs grown pert,
 She dares to steal my favourite lover's heart.

CARDELIA.

Wretch that I was! how often have I swore,
 When Winnall tallied, I would *punt* no more?
 I know the bite, yet to my ruin run;
 And see the folly which I cannot shun.

SMILINDA.

How many minds have Sharper's vows deceiv'd!
 How many curs'd the moment they believ'd!
 Yet his known falsehoods could no warning prove;
 Ah! what is warning to a maid in love?

CARDELIA.

But of what marble must that breast be form'd,
 To gaze on Bassette, and remain unwarm'd?
 When *kings, queens, knaves*, are set in decent rank,
 Expos'd in glorious heaps the tempting bank,
 Guineas, half-guineas, all the shining train;
 The winner's pleasure, and the loser's pain:
 In bright confusion open *rouleaus* lie,
 They strike the soul, and glitter in the eye.
 Fir'd by the sight, all reason I disdain:
 My passions rise, and will not bear the rein.

¹ I learn from a note to Pope's unacknowledged poem, entitled "Sober Advice from Horace," that there was "a famous staymaker of this name."—T.

Look upon Bassette, you who reason boast ;
And see if reason must not *there* be lost.

SMILINDA.

What more than marble must that heart compose,
Can hearken coldly to my Sharper's vows ?
Then when he trembles, when his blushes rise,
When awful love seems melting in his eyes,
With eager beats his Mechlin cravat moves :
He loves, I whisper to myself, *he loves* !
Such unfeign'd passion in his looks appears,
I lose all mem'ry of my former fears :
My panting heart confesses all his charms,
I yield at once, and sink into his arms :
Think of that moment, you who prudence boast,
For such a moment, prudence well were lost.

CARDELIA.

At the *Groom-porter's*, batter'd bullies play,
Some *dukes*¹ at Marybone bowl time away.
But who the bowl, or rattling dice, compares
To Bassette's heavenly joys and pleasing cares ?

SMILINDA.

Soft Simplicetta doats upon a beau ;
Prudina likes a man, and laughs at show.
Their several graces in my Sharper meet ;
Strong as the footman, as the master sweet.

LOVEIT.

Cease your contention, which has been too long
I grow impatient, and the tea too strong.
Attend, and yield to what I now decide ;
The *equipage* shall grace Smilinda's side :
The snuff-box to Cardelia I decree :
Now leave complaining, and begin your *tea*.

FRIDAY.—THE TOILETTE.

LYDIA.²

Now twenty springs had cloth'd the Park with green,
Since Lydia knew the blossom of fifteen ;

¹ Alluding to John Sheffield Duke of Buckingham, the poet.—T.

² Although I am compelled to assume that this Eclogue was found by Mr. Dal-

No lovers now her morning hours molest,
 And catch her at her toilet half undrest.
 The thund'ring knocker wakes the street no more,
 Nor chairs, nor coaches, crowd the silent door;
 Now at the window all her mornings pass,
 Or at the dumb devotion of her glass:
 Reclin'd upon her arm she pensive sate,
 And curs'd th' inconstancy of man too late.

“O youth! O spring of life, for ever lost!
 No more my name shall reign the fav'rite toast:
 On glass no more the diamond grave my name,
 And lines mis-spelt record my lover's flame:
 Nor shall side-boxes watch my wand'ring eyes,
 And, as they catch the glance, in rows arise
 With humble bows; nor white-glov'd beaux encroach
 In crowds behind, to guard me to my coach.

“What shall I do to spend the hateful day?
 At chapel shall I wear the morn away?
 Who there appears at these unmodish hours,
 But ancient matrons with their frizzled tow'rs,
 And gray religious maids? My presence there,
 Amidst that sober train, would own despair?
 Nor am I yet so old, nor is my glance
 As yet fix'd wholly on devotion's trance.
 Strait then I'll dress, and take my wonted range
 Through India shops, to Motteux's,¹ or the Change,
 Where the tall jar erects its stately pride,
 With antic shapes in China's azure dy'd;
 There careless lies a rich brocade unroll'd,
 Here shines a cabinet with burnish'd gold.
 But then, alas! I must be forc'd to pay,
 And bring no penn'orths, not a fan away!

laway and Lord Wharnccliffe in the manuscript collection of poems “verified by Lady Mary's own hand as written by her,” it is impossible to doubt that it was written by Gay. It does not appear in the manuscript copy of the Eclogues bound in “red Turkey,” to which Pope refers in his letters. Pope's statement, according to Spence (*Anecdotes*, 2nd edit. 1858, p. 221), was as follows: “Lydia in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's poems is almost wholly Gay's, and is published as such in his Works. [It appears in Gay's Poems, 4to, 1720.] There are only five or six lines new set in it by that lady. It was that which gave the hint; and she wrote the other five Eclogues.” The idea of “Town Eclogues” certainly appears to have been Gay's. His “Araminta, a Town Eclogue,” was published in Steele's *Miscellanies*, 1714.—T.

¹ See note on next poem.—T.

“How am I curs’d, unhappy and forlorn !
 My lover’s triumph, and my sex’s scorn !
 False is the pompous grief of youthful heirs ;
 False are the loose coquet’s inveigling airs ;
 False is the crafty courtier’s plighted word ;
 False are the dice when gamesters stamp the board ;
 False is the sprightly widow’s public tear ;
 Yet these to Damon’s oaths are all sincere.

“For what young flirt, base man, am I abus’d ?
 To please your wife am I unkindly us’d ?
 ’Tis true her face may boast the peach’s bloom ;
 But does her nearer whisper breathe perfume ?
 I own her taper shape is form’d to please ;
 But don’t you see her unconfin’d by stays ?
 She doubly to fifteen may claim pretence ;
 Alike we read it in her face and sense.
 Insipid, servile thing ! whom I disdain ;
 Her phlegm can best support the marriage chain.
 Damon is practis’d in the modish life,
 Can hate, and yet be civil to his wife :
 He games, he drinks, he swears, he fights, he roves ;
 Yet Chloe can believe he fondly loves.
 Mistress and wife by turns supply his need ;
 A miss for pleasure, and a wife for breed.
 Powder’d with diamonds, free from spleen or care,
 She can a sullen husband’s humour bear ;
 Her credulous friendship and her stupid ease,
 Have often been my jest in happier days ;
 How Chloe boasts and triumphs in my pains !
 To her he’s faithful ; ’tis to me he feigns.
 Am I that stupid thing¹ to bear neglect,
 And force a smile, not daring to suspect ?
 No, perjur’d man ! a wife may be content ;
 But you shall find a mistress can resent.”

Thus love-sick Lydia rav’d ; her maid appears,
 And in her faithful hand the band-box bears²

¹ In the original edition, “senseless thing.”—W.

² In the original edition,

“With steady hand, the band-box charge she bears ;”
 and the next two lines do not appear.—W.

(The cestus, that reformed inconstant Jove,
 Not better fill'd with what allur'd to love) ;
 "How well this ribbon's gloss becomes your face !" ¹
 She cries in rapture ; "then so sweet a lace !
 How charmingly you look ! so bright ! so fair !
 'Tis to your eyes the head-dress owes its air !"
 Straight Lydia smiled ; the comb adjusts her locks ;
 And at the play-house Harry keeps her box.

SATURDAY.—THE SMALL-POX.

FLAVIA.²

THE wretched Flavia, on her couch reclin'd,
 Thus breath'd the anguish of a wounded mind,
 A glass revers'd in her right hand she bore,
 For now she shunn'd the face she sought before.
 "How am I chang'd ! alas ! how am I grown
 A frightful spectre to myself unknown !
 Where's my complexion ? where my radiant bloom,
 That promis'd happiness for years to come ?
 Then with what pleasure I this face survey'd !
 To look once more, my visits oft delay'd !
 Charm'd with the view, a fresher red would rise,
 And a new life shot sparkling from my eyes !
 "Ah ! faithless glass, my wonted bloom restore ;
 Alas ! I rave, that bloom is now no more !
 The greatest good the gods on men bestow,
 Ev'n youth itself, to me is useless now.
 There was a time (oh ! that I could forget !)
 When opera-tickets pour'd before my feet ;
 And at the Ring, where brightest beauties shine,
 The earliest cherries of the spring were mine.
 Witness, O Lilly ;³ and thou, Motteux, tell,
 How much japan these eyes have made ye sell.

¹ In the original edition, "grace."—W.

² Lady Hertford appears to have regarded this poem as expressing Lady Mary's own feelings on being attacked with small-pox.—*See Hertf. and Pomf. Corresp.*, 2nd edit. ii. 169.—T.

³ Charles Lilly, who was one of the publishers of the *Tatler*, a perfumer at the corner of Beaufort-buildings in the Strand, and no doubt a dealer in China and Japan knick-knacks. Motteux was equally well known as a poet, and a "china-man," or dealer in tea and Chinese curiosities. His poem on Tea (*Tonson*, 1712) has a

With what contempt ye saw me oft despise
 The humble offer of the raffled prize ;
 For at each raffle still each prize I bore,
 With scorn rejected, or with triumph wore !
 Now beauty's fled, and presents are no more !

“ For me the patriot has the House forsook,
 And left debates to catch a passing look :
 For me the soldier has soft verses writ :
 For me the beau has aim'd to be a wit.
 For me the wit to nonsense was betray'd ;
 The gamester has for me his dun delay'd,
 And overseen the card he would have play'd.
 The bold and haughty, by success made vain,
 Aw'd by my eyes have trembled to complain :
 The bashful 'squire, touch'd by a wish unknown,
 Has dar'd to speak with spirit not his own :
 Fir'd by one wish, all did alike adore ;
 Now beauty's fled, and lovers are no more !

“ As round the room I turn my weeping eyes,
 New unaffected scenes of sorrow rise.
 Far from my sight that killing picture bear,
 The face disfigure, and the canvas tear :
 That picture which with pride I used to show,
 The lost resemblance that upbraids me now.
 And thou, my toilette ! where I oft have sat,
 While hours unheeded pass'd in deep debate
 How curls should fall, or where a patch to place ;
 If blue or scarlet best became my face :
 Now on some happier nymph your aid bestow ;
 On fairer heads, ye useless jewels, glow !
 No borrow'd lustre can my charms restore ;
 Beauty is fled, and dress is now no more !

“ Ye meaner beauties, I permit ye shine ;
 Go, triumph in the hearts that once were mine :

prefatory address to the Spectator, dated from his china shop in Leadenhall-street, wherein he says : “ Traffic will hardly let poetry, which once seemed my business, be so much as my diversion.” He came to a mysterious end in 1718, there being great suspicion of his having been murdered. His “Japan” ware and other curiosities were advertised to be sold for the benefit of his widow in the *Daily Courant* of Feb. 26, 1718.—T.

But 'midst your triumphs with confusion know,
 'Tis to my ruin all your charms ye owe.
 Would pitying Heav'n restore my wonted mien,
 Ye still might move unthought of and unseen :
 But oh, how vain, how wretched is the boast
 Of beauty faded, and of empire lost !
 What now is left but, weeping, to deplore
 My beauty fled, and empire now no more !

“ Ye cruel chemists, what withheld your aid ?
 Could no pomatum save a trembling maid ?
 How false and trifling is that art ye boast !
 No art can give me back my beauty lost.
 In tears, surrounded by my friends, I lay
 Mask'd o'er, and trembled at the sight of day ;
 Mirmillio came my fortune to deplore
 (A golden-headed cane well carv'd he bore),
 Cordials, he cried, my spirits must restore !
 Beauty is fled, and spirit is no more !

“ Galen, the grave officious Squirt was there.
 With fruitless grief and unavailing care ;
 Machaon too, the great Machaon, known
 By his red cloak and his superior frown ;
 And why, he cried, this grief and this despair ?
 You shall again be well, again be fair ;
 Believe my oath (with that an oath he swore) ;
 False was his oath ; my beauty was no more !

“ Cease, hapless maid, no more thy tale pursue,
 Forsake mankind, and bid the world adieu !
 Monarchs and beauties rule with equal sway :
 All strive to serve, and glory to obey :
 Alike unpitied when depos'd they grow,
 Men mock the idol of their former vow.

“ Adieu ! ye parks—in some obscure recess,
 Where gentle streams will weep at my distress,
 Where no false friend will in my grief take part,
 And mourn my ruin with a joyful heart ;
 There let me live in some deserted place,
 There hide in shades this lost inglorious face.
 Plays, operas, circles, I no more must view !
 My toilette, patches, all the world adieu !”

VERSES,¹

Written in the Chiosk of the British Palace, at Pera, overlooking the city of Constantinople, Dec. 26, 1718 [1717].

GIVE me, great God! said I, a little farm,
In summer shady, and in winter warm;
Where a clear spring gives birth to murm'ring brooks,
By nature gliding down the mossy rocks.
Not artfully by leaden pipes convey'd,
Or greatly falling in a forc'd cascade,
Pure and unsullied winding through the shade.
All bounteous Heaven has added to my prayer,
A softer climate and a purer air.

Our frozen isle now chilling winter binds,
Deform'd by rains, and rough with blasting winds;
The wither'd woods grow white with hoary frost,
By driving storms their verdant beauty lost;
The trembling birds their leafless covert shun,
And seek in distant climes a warmer sun:
The water-nymphs their silent urns deplore,
Ev'n Thames, benumb'd, 's a river now no more:
The barren meads no longer yield delight,
By glist'ning snows made painful to the sight.

Here summer reigns with one eternal smile,
Succeeding harvests bless the happy soil;
Fair fertile fields, to whom indulgent Heaven
Has ev'ry charm of ev'ry season given.
No killing cold deforms the beauteous year,
The springing flowers no coming winter fear.
But as the parent rose decays and dies,
The infant buds with brighter colours rise,
And with fresh sweets the mother's scent supplies.

Near them the violet grows with odours blest,
And blooms in more than Tyrian purple drest;

¹ These verses Lady Mary tells us were sent from Constantinople to her uncle Fielding, and "by his (well intended) indiscretion shown about, copies taken, and at length miserably printed." The date, "1718," is clearly a mistake; for Lady Mary had returned to England before December of that year. It must have been 1717. The poem first appeared in Anthony Hammond's *Miscellany*, published in May, 1720.—T.

The rich jonquils their golden beams display,
And shine in glory's emulating day ;
The peaceful groves their verdant leaves retain,
The streams still murmur undefil'd with rain,
And tow'ring greens adorn the fruitful plain.
The warbling kind uninterrupted sing,
Warmed with enjoyments of perpetual spring.

Here, at my window, I at once survey
The crowded city and resounding sea ;
In distant views the Asian mountains rise,
And lose their snowy summits in the skies ;
Above these mountains proud Olympus tow'rs,
The parliamentary seat of heavenly pow'rs !
New to the sight my ravish'd eyes admire
Each gilded crescent and each antique spire,
The marble mosques, beneath whose ample domes
Fierce warlike sultans sleep in peaceful tombs ;
Those lofty structures, once the Christian's boast,
Their names, their beauty, and their honours lost ;
Those altars bright with gold and sculpture grac'd,
By barb'rous zeal of savage foes defac'd ;
Soph'a alone, her ancient name retains,
Though th' unbeliever now her shrine profanes ;
Where holy saints have died in sacred cells,
Where monarchs pray'd, the frantic dervise dwells.
How art thou fall'n, imperial city, low !
Where are thy hopes of Roman glory now ?
Where are thy palaces by prelates rais'd ?
Where Grecian artists all their skill display'd,
Before the happy sciences decay'd ;
So vast, that youthful kings might here reside,
So splendid, to content a patriarch's pride ;
Convents where emperors profess'd of old,
The labour'd pillars that their triumphs told ;
Vain monuments of them that once were great,
Sunk undistinguish'd by one common fate ;
One little spot the tenure small contains,
Of Greek nobility the poor remains ;
Where other Helens, with like powerful charms,
Had once engag'd the warring world in arms ;

Those names which royal ancestors can boast,
In mean mechanic arts obscurely lost ;
Those eyes a second Homer might inspire,
Fix'd at the loom, destroy their useless fire :
Griev'd at a view, which struck upon my mind
The short-liv'd vanity of humankind.

In gaudy objects I indulge my sight,
And turn where Eastern pomp gives gay delight ;
See the vast train in various habits drest,
By the bright scimitar and sable vest
The proud vizier distinguish'd o'er the rest !
Six slaves in gay attire his bridle hold,
His bridle rich with gems, and stirrups gold ;
His snowy steed adorn'd with costly pride,
Whole troops of soldiers mounted by his side,
These top the plummy crest Arabian courtiers guide.
With artful duty all decline their eyes,
No bellowing shouts of noisy crowds arise ;
Silence, in solemn state, the march attends,
Till at the dread divan the slow procession ends.

Yet not these prospects all profusely gay,
The gilded navy that adorns the sea,
The rising city in confusion fair,
Magnificently form'd, irregular,
Where woods and palaces at once surprise,
Gardens on gardens, domes on domes arise,
And endless beauties tire the wand'ring eyes,
So soothe my wishes, or so charm my mind,
As this retreat secure from humankind.
No knave's successful craft does spleen excite,
No coxcomb's tawdry splendour shocks my sight,
No mob-alarm awakes my female fear,
No praise my mind, nor envy hurts my ear,
Ev'n fame itself can hardly reach me here ;
Impertinence, with all her tattling train,
Fair-sounding flattery's delicious bane ;
Censorious folly, noisy party rage,
The thousand tongues with which she must engage
Who dares have virtue in a vicious age.

EPILOGUE TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.¹

Designed to be spoken by Mrs. Oldfield.

WHAT could luxurious woman wish for more,
To fix her joys, or to extend her pow'r ?
Their every wish was in this Mary seen,
Gay, witty, youthful, beauteous, and a queen.
Vain useless blessings with ill-conduct join'd !
Light as the air, and fleeting as the wind.
Whatever poets write, and lovers vow,
Beauty, what poor omnipotence hast thou !

Queen Bess had wisdom, council, power, and laws ;
How few espous'd a wretched beauty's cause !
Learn thence, ye fair, more solid charms to prize ;
Contemn the idle flatt'ers of your eyes.
The brightest object shines but while 'tis new :
That influence lessens by familiar view.
Monarchs and beauties rule with equal sway,
All strive to serve, and glory to obey ;
Alike unpitied when depos'd they grow—
Men mock the idle of their former vow.

Two great examples have been shown to-day,
To what sure ruin passion does betray ;
What long repentance to short joys is due ;
When reason rules, what glory must ensue.

If you will love, love like Eliza then ;
Love for amusement, like those traitors, men.
Think that the pastime of a leisure hour
She favour'd oft—but never shar'd her pow'r.

The traveller by desert wolves pursu'd,
If by his heart the savage foe's subdu'd,
The world will still the noble act applaud,
Though victory was gain'd by needful fraud.

Such is, my tender sex, our helpless case ;

¹ This epilogue was intended for a play on the story of Mary Queen of Scots, which Philip Duke of Wharton began to write, but never finished. No part of the play now remains but these four lines :

“ Sure were I free, and Norfolk were a prisoner,
I'd fly with more impatience to his arms,
Than the poor Israelite gaz'd on the serpent,
When life was the reward of every look.”

Walpole's Catalogue, vol. ii. 134.—D.

And such the barbarous heart, hid by the begging face ;
 By passion fir'd, and not withheld by shame,
 They cruel hunters are, we trembling game.
 Trust me, dear ladies (for I know 'em well),
 They burn to triumph, and they sigh to tell :
 Cruel to them that yield, cullies to them that sell.
 Believe me, 'tis by far the wiser course,
 Superior art should meet superior force :
 Hear, but be faithful to your int'rest still :
 Secure your hearts—then fool with whom you will.

EPILOGUE TO THE TRAGEDY OF CATO.¹

You see in ancient Rome what folly reign'd ;
 A folly British men would have disdain'd.
 Here's none so weak to pity Cato's case,
 Who might have liv'd, and had a handsome place ;
 But rashly vain, and insolently great,
 He perish'd by his fault—and not his fate.
 Thank Heav'n ! our patriots better ends pursue,
 With something more than glory in their view.
 Poets write morals—priests for martyrs preach—
 Neither such fools to practise what they teach.

Though your dear country much you wish to serve,
 For bonny Britons 'tis too hard to starve ;
 Or what's all one, to any generous mind,
 From girls, champagne, and gaming, be confin'd ;
 Portius might well obey his sire's command,
 Returning to his small paternal land ;
 A low estate was ample to support
 His private life, far distant from the court !
 Far from the crowd of emulating beaux,
 Where Martia never wanted birthday clothes.

For you, who live in these more polish'd days,
 To spend your money, lo ! ten thousand ways ;
 Dice may run ill, or duns demand their due,
 And ways to get (God knows) are very few ;
 In times so differing, who shall harshly blame
 Our modern heroes, not to act the same ?

¹ The reader need hardly be informed that this was not the epilogue which was spoken on the performance of Cato.—T.

TO A FRIEND ON HIS TRAVELS.

FROM this vile town, immers'd in smoke and care,
 To you who brighten in a purer air,
 Your faithful friend conveys her tenderest thought
 (Though now perhaps neglected and forgot).
 May blooming health your wonted mirth restore,
 And every pleasure crown your every hour ;
 Caress'd, esteem'd, and lov'd, your merit known,
 And foreign lands admire you, like your own :
 Whilst I in silence various fortunes bear,
 Distracted with the rage of bosom-war :
 My restless fever tears my changeful brain,
 With mix'd ideas of delight and pain ;
 Sometimes soft views my morning dreams employ
 In the faint dawn of visionary joy ;
 Which rigid reason quickly drives away—
 I seek the shade and fly from rising day :
 In pleasing madness meet some moment's ease,
 And fondly cherish my belov'd disease.

If female weakness melt my woman's mind,
 At least no weakness in the choice I find,
 Not sooth'd to softness by a warbling flute,
 Nor the bought merit of a birthday suit ;
 Not lost my heart by the surprising skill
 In opera tunes, in dancing, or quadrille.
 The only charm my inclination moves
 Is such a virtue, Heaven itself approves !
 A soul superior to each vulgar view,
 Great, steady, gentle, generous, and true.
 How I regret my trifling hours past,
 And look with sorrow o'er the dreary waste !
 In false pursuits and vanity bestow'd,
 The perfect image of a dirty road ;
 Through puddles oft, o'er craggy rocks I stray,
 A tiresome dull uncomfortable way :
 And after toiling long through thick and thin
 To reach some meanly mercenary inn,
 The bills are high, and very bad the fare,
 I curse the wretched entertainment there :
 And, jogging on, resolve to stop no more
 Where gaudy signs invite me to the door.

TO THE SAME.

THOUGH old in ill, the traitor sure should find
 Some secret sting transfix his guilty mind.
 Though bribes or favour may protect his fame,
 Or fear restrain invectives on his name ;
 None 'quits himself—his own impartial thought
 Condemns—and conscience shall record the fault.
 Yet more, my friend ! your happy state may bear
 This disappointment, as below your care.
 For what you have, return to Heav'n your thanks ;
 Few share the prizes, many draw the blanks.
 Of breach of promise loudly you complain,
 Have you then known the world so long in vain ?
 Worse than the iron age, our impious times
 Have learn'd to laugh at most flagitious crimes.
 Are you to know that 'tis a jest to find
 Unthinking honesty pervade the mind ?
 At best, they say, the man is strangely odd
 Who keeps his oath, and can believe a God.
 This was the cant when Edward held the throne,
 Before Spinoza wrote, or Hobbes was known ;
 When the gilt Bible was the king's delight,
 When prayer preceded day, and hymns the night.
 Now softening eunuchs sing Italian airs,
 The dancing dame to midnight ball repairs.
 Now, if an honest man (like you) I view,
 Contemning interest, and to virtue true,
 I deem, he deviates from Nature's rules,
 Like burning hills, or petrifying pools.
 I stand astonish'd at the strange portent,
 And think some revolution the event ;
 As all grave heads were startled, as they heard
 That a new comet in the west appear'd ;
 When from a human mother¹ rabbits sprung,
 And Ward his pills like hand-granadoes flung ;
 When *gratis* scattering cures amidst the crowd²—
 A miracle ! as Charteris³ swears aloud—

¹ Mary Tofts, the celebrated rabbit-woman of Godalmin.—D.

² Ward, the celebrated quack doctor, announced that he would administer his pill and drop gratis to indigent persons.—T.

³ Colonel Charteris, of infamous memory, satirised by Pope and Arbuthnot.—D.

A greater miracle I daily see,
The ancient faith of Pius reign in thee.

Observe the wretch, who has that faith forsook,
How clear his voice, and how assur'd his look !
Like innocence, and as serenely bold,
Conscious protection of almighty gold !
While thus he reasons to relieve his fears :
" Oft I've deceiv'd, yet still have kept my ears.
I have been threat'ned for a broken vow,
And yet successively have laugh'd till now,
And will laugh on, my fortune's not the worse,
When starving cullies rail, or vainly curse."
Shall then the villain 'scape ? such knaves as he
Be rich and safe, and from all vengeance free ?
Consider, friend, but coolly, and you'll find
Revenge the frailty of a feeble mind ;
Nor think he 'scapes though he should never feel
The pangs of poison, or the force of steel.
There is a time when conscience shakes the soul,
When Toland's tenets cannot fear control,
When secret anguish fills the anxious breast,
Vacant from business, nor compos'd by rest ;
Then dreams invade, the injured gods appear
All arm'd with thunder, and awake his fear ;
The wretch will start at every flash that flies,
Grow pale at the first murmur of the skies ;
Then, if a fever fires corrupted blood,
In every fit he feels the hand of God.
Trembling, and sunk into the last despair,
He dares not offer one repenting prayer ;
For how can hope with desperate guilt agree ?
And the worst beast is worthier life than he ;
This, at the best, will be his certain fate,
Or Heav'n may sooner think his crimes complete.

FRAGMENT TO

* * * * *

LET mules and asses in that circle tread,
And proud of trappings toss a feather'd head ;

Leave you the stupid business of the state,
 Strive to be happy, and despise the great :
 Come where the Graces guide the gentle day,
 Where Venus rules amidst her native sea,
 Where at her altar gallantries appear,
 And even Wisdom dares not show severe.

* * * * *

TO MR. ———

FOR ever blest be that prolific brain
 Which can such store of images contain !
 Thus the charg'd trees, with blooming odours crown'd,
 Shed their fair blossoms with profusion round ;
 So swells the brook with heav'n-descended rain,
 And flows meand'ring on thirsty plain ;
 Such various talents were by Heav'n design'd
 (Too vast a treasure for a single mind),
 To please, astonish, and instruct mankind.
 With a delight not to be told, I view
 Themes long exhausted in your hands grow new ;
 Past all describing your descriptions are,
 So full, so just, so bold, yet regular ;
 The style so varied that it wants a name,
 Which, ever differing, ever is the same ;
 You raise or calm our passions as you please,
 The human heart your powerful pen obeys.
 When eager Trasimond pursues the course,
 We hear the whip, and see the foaming horse ;
 With Sophronia we have wept and smil'd,
 So soon offended—sooner reconcil'd.

Go on, great author ! that the world may see
 How bright, when from pedantic fetters free,
 True genius shines, and shines alone in thee.
 Give new editions, with a noble scorn
 Of insect critics, who'd obscure thy morn ;
 Neglect their censures, nor thy work delay,
 The owls still sicken at the sight of day.

JOHN DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

WHEN the proud Frenchman's strong rapacious hand
 Spread over Europe ruin and command,
 Our sinking temples and expiring law
 With trembling dread the rolling tempest saw ;
 Destin'd a province to insulting Gaul,
 This genius rose, and stopp'd the ponderous fall.
 His temperate valour form'd no giddy scheme,
 No victory rais'd him to a rage of fame ;
 The happy temper of his even mind
 No danger e'er could shock, or conquest blind.
 Fashion'd alike by Nature and by Art,
 To please, engage, and int'rest ev'ry heart.
 In public life by all who saw approv'd,
 In private hours by all who knew him lov'd.

A CHARACTER.

THOUGH a strong vanity may you persuade—
 You are not for a politician made ;
 Your tropes are drawn from Robin Walpole's head,
 Your sense is but repeating what he said ;
 A useful puppy, eminently known,
 As proud to father what he will not own,
 Some arguments he leaves you to expose,
 Some valets flutter in my lord's old clothes.
 But should he strip you of his borrow'd sense,
 How poorly thin your boasted eloquence !
 Know your own talents better, I advise ;
 Be brisk, yet dull, but aim not to look wise ;
 In low insipid rhymes place your delight ;
 Laugh without jests, and without reading write.
 Despis'd by men, in ladies' ruelles sit,
 Where country coquettes bolster up your wit.
 May all your minuets applauses meet !
 An able coxcomb only in your feet.
 By fawning lies, in leagues with court-knaves grow,
 And smile on beauties whom you *do not know*.

Then, acting, all the coyness of a lover,
 Your *no-intrigue* endeavour to discover.
 Aiming at wit, in many an evil hour,
 Have the perpetual will without the power.
 Conceit for *breeding*, rude for easy take,
 Horseplay for wit, and noise for mirth mistake.
 Love's perfect joys to perfect men belong;
 Seek you but *the occasion for a song*.
 Thus to the end of life may you remain
 A merry blockhead, treacherous and vain.

AN ANSWER TO A LOVE-LETTER, IN VERSE.

Is it to me this sad lamenting strain?
 Are Heaven's choicest gifts bestow'd in vain?
 A plenteous fortune and a beauteous bride,
 Your love rewarded, and content your pride;
 Yet, leaving her, 'tis me that you pursue,
 Without one single charm—but being new.
 How vile is man! how I detest the ways
 Of covert falsehood and designing praise!
 As tasteless, easier happiness you slight,
 Ruin your joy, and mischief your delight.
 Why should poor pug (the mimic of your kind)
 Wear a rough chain, and be to box confin'd?
 Some cup, perhaps, he breaks, or tears a fan,
 While moves, unpunish'd the destroyer man;
 Not bound by vows, and unrestrain'd by shame,
 In sport you break the heart, and rend the fame.
 Not that your art can be successful here,
 Th' already plunder'd need no robber fear.
 Nor sighs nor charms, nor flattery, can move,
 Too well secur'd against a second love.
 Once, and but once, that devil charm'd my mind,
 To reason deaf, to observation blind,
 I idly hop'd (what cannot Love persuade!)
 My fondness equall'd and my truth repaid:
 Slow to distrust, and willing to believe;
 Long hush'd my doubts, I would myself deceive.

But oh! too soon—this tale would ever last—
 Sleep on my wrongs, and let me think them past.
 For you, who mourn with counterfeited grief,
 And ask so boldly, like a begging thief,
 May soon some other nymph inflict the pain
 You know so well with cruel art to feign.
 Though long you've sported with Dan Cupid's dart,
 You *may* see eyes, and you *may* feel a heart.
 So the brisk wits who stop the evening coach,
 Laugh at the fear that follows their approach;
 With idle mirth and haughty scorn despise
 The passenger's pale cheek, and staring eyes;
 But seiz'd by justice, find a fright no jest,
 And all the terror doubled in their breast.

LORD HERVEY TO MR. FOX.

Written at Florence, 1729, in imitation of the Sixth Ode of the Second Book
 of Horace.

"Septimi Gades aditure mecum."

THOU dearest youth, who taught me first to know
 What pleasures from a real friendship flow;
 Where neither int'rest nor deceit have part,
 But all the warmth is native of the heart;
 Thou know'st to comfort, soothe, or entertain,
 Joy of my health, and cordial to my pain.
 When life seem'd failing in her latest stage,
 And fell disease anticipated age;
 When wasting sickness, and afflictive pain,
 By Æsculapius' sons oppos'd in vain,
 Forc'd me reluctant, desperate to explore
 A warmer sun, and seek a milder shore,
 Thy steady love, with unexampled truth,
 Forsook each gay companion of thy youth,
 Whate'er the prosperous or the great employs,
 Business and interest, and love's softer joys,
 The weary steps of misery to attend,
 To share distress, and make a wretch thy friend.
 If o'er the mountain's snowy top we stray,
 Where Carthage first explor'd the vent'rous way;
 Or through the tainted air of Rome's parched plains,
 Where want resides and superstition reigns;

Cheerful and unrepining still you bear
 Each dangerous rigour of the varying year ;
 And kindly anxious for thy friend alone,
 Lament his sufferings, and forget thy own.
 Oh ! would kind Heaven, those tedious sufferings past,
 Permit me, Ickworth,¹ rest and health at last !
 In that lov'd shade, my youth's delightful seat,
 My early pleasure, and my late retreat,
 Where lavish Nature's favourite blessings flow,
 And all the seasons all their sweets bestow ;
 There might I trifle carelessly away
 The milder ev'ning of life's clouded day ;
 From business and the world's intrusion free,
 With books, with love, with beauty, and with thee ;
 No further want, no wish, yet unpossess'd,
 Could e'er disturb this unambitious breast.
 Let those who Fortune's shining gifts implore,
 Who sue for glory, splendour, wealth, or power,
 View this inactive state with feverish eyes,
 And pleasure they can never taste, despise ;
 Let them still court that goddess' falser joys,
 Who, while she grants their pray'r, their peace destroys.
 I envy not the foremost of the great,
 Not Walpole's self, directing Europe's fate ;
 Still let him load ambition's thorny shrine,
 Fame be his portion, and contentment mine.
 But if the gods, sinister still, deny
 To live in Ickworth, let me there but die ;
 Thy hands to close my eyes in Death's long night,
 Thy image to attract their latest sight :
 Then to the grave attend thy Poet's hearse,
 And love his memory as you lov'd his verse.

CONTINUATION

BY LADY M. W. MONTAGU.

So sung the poet in a humble strain,
 With empty pockets, and a head in pain,
 Where the soft clime inclin'd the soul to rest,
 And past'ral images inspir'd the breast.

¹ In Suffolk, the seat of the Earl of Bristol.—D.

Apollo listen'd from his heavenly bower,
 And, in his health restor'd, express'd his power.
 Pygmalion thus before the Paphian shrine,
 With trembling vows address'd the power divine ;
 Durst hardly make his hopeless wishes known,
 And scarce a greater miracle was shown—
 Returning vigour glow'd in every vein,
 And gay ideas flutter'd in the brain ;
 Back he returns to breathe his native air,
 And all his first resolves are melted there !

AN EPISTLE

TO THE EARL OF BURLINGTON.¹

How happy you ! who varied joys pursue ;
 And every hour presents you something new !
 Plans, schemes, and models, all Palladio's art,
 For six long months have gain'd upon your heart ;
 Of colonnades, of corridors you talk,
 The winding staircase and the cover'd walk ;
 You blend the orders with Vitruvian toil,
 And raise with wond'rous joy the fancy'd pile :
 But the dull workman's slow-performing hand
 But coldly executes his lord's command.
 With dirt and mortar soon you grow displeas'd,
 Planting succeeds, and avenues are rais'd,
 Canals are cut, and mountains level made,
 Bow'rs of retreat, and galleries of shade ;
 The shaven turf presents a lively green ;
 The bordering flowers in mystic knots are seen :
 With studied art on nature you refine—
 The spring beheld you warm in this design,
 But scarce the cold attacks your fav'rite trees,
 Your inclination fails, and wishes freeze :

¹ Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington, the friend and correspondent of Pope. This poem has been printed as addressed to Lord Bathurst, and Lady Mary's friend the Countess of Pomfret appears to have been of this opinion. The allusions apply rather to Burlington "the architect" than to Bathurst, who, though also a cultivator of "Palladio's Art," was more often designated as "the planter." Every reader remembers Pope's celebrated Epistle to the Earl of Burlington, written, as Pope tells us in a note, when the earl was "publishing the Designs of Inigo Jones and the Antiquities of Rome by Palladio."—T.

You quit the grove so lately you admir'd ;
With other views your eager hopes are fir'd ;
Post to the city you direct your way ;
Not blooming paradise could bribe your stay :
Ambition shows you power's brightest side,
'Tis meanly poor in solitude to hide :
Though certain pains attend the cares of state,
A good man owes his country to be great ;
Should act abroad the high distinguish'd part,
Or show at least the purpose of his heart.
With thoughts like these the shining courts you seek,
Full of new projects for almost a week ;
You then despise the tinsel-glittering snare,
Think vile mankind below a serious care.
Life is too short for any distant aim ;
And cold the dull reward of future fame :
Be happy then, while yet you have to live ;
And love is all the blessing Heav'n can give.
Fir'd by new passion you address the fair,
Survey the opera as a gay parterre ;
Young Chloe's bloom had made you certain prize,
But for a sidelong glance from Celia's eyes :
Your beating heart acknowledges her power ;
Your eager eyes her lovely form devour ;
You feel the poison swelling in your breast,
And all your soul by fond desire possess'd.
In dying sighs a long three hours are past ;
To some assembly with impatient haste,
With trembling hope, and doubtful fear, you move,
Resolv'd to tempt your fate, and own your love :
But there Belinda meets you on the stairs,
Easy her shape, attracting all her airs ;
A smile she gives, and with a smile can wound ;
Her melting voice hath music in the sound ;
Her every motion wears resistless grace ;
Wit in her mien, and pleasure in her face :
Here while you vow eternity of love,
Chloe and Celia unregarded move.
Thus on the sands of Afric's burning plains,
However deeply made, no long impress remains ;

The slightest leaf can leave its figure there ;
 The strongest form is scatter'd by the air.
 So yielding the warm temper of your mind,
 So touch'd by every eye, so toss'd by wind ;
 Oh ! how unlike the Heav'n my soul design'd !
 Unseen, unheard, the throng around me move ;
 Not wishing praise, insensible of love ;
 No whispers soften, nor no beauties fire ;
 Careless I see the dance, and coldly hear the lyre.

So num'rous herds are driv'n o'er the rock ;
 No print is left of all the passing flock :
 So sings the wind around the solid stone ;
 So vainly beat the waves with fruitless moan.
 Tedious the toil, and great the workman's care,
 Who dares attempt to fix impressions there :
 But should some swain, more skilful than the rest,
 Engrave his name upon this marble breast,
 Not rolling ages could deface that name ;
 Through all the storms of life 'tis still the same :
 Though length of years with moss may shade the ground,
 Deep, though unseen, remains the secret wound.

VERSES¹

ADDRESSED TO THE IMITATOR OF THE FIRST SATIRE OF THE SECOND
 BOOK OF HORACE.

IN two large columns on thy motley page,
 Where Roman wit is strip'd with English rage ;

¹ These verses, although contained in the collection of poems verified by Lady Mary's own hand as written by her, have always been considered the joint composition of Lord Hervey and Lady Mary, and to have been occasioned by some lines, which they supposed to refer to them, in Pope's Imitation of the First Satire of the Second Book of Horace. In the Introductory Anecdotes in vol. i. it is stated that they "will not be reprinted in this edition;" but, upon further consideration, the Editor has thought it right to leave them. They have been printed in all the former editions, and he therefore does not think himself warranted in not inserting them in this, however he may disapprove of some parts of them. With regard to those parts, it appears to be only fair to Lady Mary's memory, to remind the reader that the lines in Pope's poem, which she conceived to apply to her, are most gross and unjustifiable; and when the satirist indulges in such attacks, it may be very unwise, but is certainly quite natural, that his victims should retort upon him, in the way they think likely to wound him most severely, if they are capable of doing so with effect; and the reader of these verses will probably be of opinion that the writer or writers of them were not without that power.—W.

Where ribaldry to satire makes pretence,
 And modern scandal rolls with ancient sense :
 Whilst on one side we see how Horace thought,
 And on the other how he never wrote ;
 Who can believe, who view the bad, the good,
 That the dull copyist better understood
 That spirit he pretends to imitate,
 Than heretofore that Greek he did translate ?

Thine is just such an image of *his* pen,
 As thou thyself art of the sons of men,
 Where our own species in burlesque we trace,
 A sign-post likeness of the human race,
 That is at once resemblance and disgrace.

Horace can laugh, is delicate, is clear,
 You only coarsely rail, or darkly sneer ;
 His style is elegant, his diction pure,
 Whilst none thy crabbed numbers can endure ;
 Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obscure.¹

If *he* has thorns, they all on roses grow ;
 Thine like thistles, and mean brambles show ;
 With this exception, that, though rank the soil,
 Weeds as they are, they seem produc'd by toil.

Satire should, like a polish'd razor, keen,
 Wound with a touch, that's scarcely felt or seen :
 Thine is an oyster-knife, that hacks and hews ;
 The rage, but not the talent to abuse ;
 And is in *hate*, what *love* is in the stews.
 'Tis the gross *lust* of hate, that still annoys,
 Without distinction, as gross love enjoys :
 Neither to folly, nor to vice confin'd,
 The object of thy spleen is humankind :
 It preys on all who yield, or who resist :
 To thee 'tis provocation to exist.

¹ This line ought never to have had a place in a poem written by Lord Hervey and Lady Mary Wortley. They ought to have disdained to taunt Pope upon his origin. This taunt and that upon his figure, a few lines before, are certainly unworthy of them. These reflections, however, seem to have been most keenly felt by Pope; and in the letter to Arbuthnot, which is called the Prologue to the Imitations of Horace, he is at considerable pains to refute that respecting his birth, which makes it probable that that letter was written, in fact, after the Imitations of Horace.—W.

But if thou seest¹ a great and generous heart,
 Thy bow is doubly bent to force a dart.
 Nor dignity nor innocence is spar'd,
 Nor age, nor sex, nor thrones, nor graves, rever'd.
 Nor only justice vainly we demand,
 But even benefits can't rein thy hand;
 To this or that alike in vain we trust,
 Nor find thee less ungrateful than unjust.

Not even youth and beauty can control
 The universal rancour of thy soul;
 Charms that might soften superstition's rage,
 Might humble pride, or thaw the ice of age.
 But how should'st thou by beauty's force be mov'd,
 No more for loving made than to be lov'd?
 It was the equity of righteous Heav'n,
 That such a soul to such a form was giv'n;
 And shows the uniformity of fate,
 That one so odious should be born to hate.

When God created thee, one would believe
 He said the same as to the snake of Eve;
 To human race antipathy declare,
 'Twixt them and thee be everlasting war.
 But oh! the sequel of the sentence dread,
 And whilst you *bruise their heel*, beware your head.
 Nor think thy weakness shall be thy defence,
 The female scold's protection in offence.
 Sure 'tis as fair to beat who cannot fight,
 As 'tis to libel those who cannot write.
 And if thou draw'st thy pen to aid the law,
 Others a cudgel, or a rod, may draw.
 If none with vengeance yet thy crimes pursue,
 Or give thy manifold affronts their due;
 If limbs unbroken, skin without a stain,
 Unwhipt, unblanketed, unkick'd, unslain,
 That wretched little carcase you retain,
 The reason is, not that the world wants eyes,
 But thou'rt so mean, they see, and they despise:
 When fretful *porcupine*, with ranc'rous will,
 From mounted back shoots forth a harmless quill,

¹ Taste, an Epistle, in which are the reflections upon the Duke of Chandos.—D.

Cool the spectators stand ; and all the while
 Upon the angry little monster smile.
 Thus 'tis with thee :—while impotently safe,
 You strike unwounding, we unhurt can laugh.
*Who but must laugh, this bully when he sees,
 A puny insect shiv'ring at a breeze ?*
 One over-match'd by every blast of wind,
 Insulting and provoking all mankind.

Is this the *thing* to keep mankind in awe,
To make those tremble who escape the law ?
 Is this the *ridicule* to live so long,
The deathless satire and immortal song ?
 No : like the self-blown praise, thy scandal flies ;
 And, as we're told of wasps, it stings and dies.

If none do yet return th' intended blow,
 You all your safety to your dulness owe :
 But whilst that armour thy poor corse defends,
 'Twill make thy readers few, as are thy friends :
 Those, who thy nature loath'd, yet lov'd thy art,
 Who lik'd thy head, and yet abhorr'd thy heart :
 Chose thee to read, but never to converse,
 And scorn'd in prose him whom they priz'd in verse
 Ev'n they shall now their partial error see,
 Shall shun thy writings like thy company ;
 And to thy books shall ope their eyes no more
 Than to thy person they would do their door.

Nor thou the justice of the world disown,
 That leaves thee thus an outcast and alone ;
 For though in law to murder be to kill,
 In equity the murder's in the will :
 Then whilst with coward-hand you stab a name,
 And try at least t' assassinate our fame,
 Like the first bold assassin's be thy lot,
 Ne'er be thy guilt forgiven, or forgot ;
 But, as thou hat'st, be hated by mankind,
 And with the emblem of thy crooked mind
 Mark'd on thy back, like Cain by God's own hand,
 Wander, like him, accursed through the land.

UNFINISHED SKETCHES

OF A LARGER POEM.

Now, with fresh vigour, morn her light displays,
 And the glad birds salute her kindling rays ;
 The opening buds confess the sun's return,
 And rous'd from night all nature seems new-born ;
 When ponderous Dulness slowly wing'd her way,
 And with thick fogs oppos'd the rising day.
 Phœbus retir'd as from Thyestes' feast,
 Droop'd all the flow'rs, th' aerial music ceas'd.
 Pleas'd with her influence, she exults with pride,
 " Shall mortals then escape my power ?" she cried :
 " Nay, in this town where smoke and mists conspire
 To cloud the head, and damp the poet's fire,
 Shall Addison my empire here dispute,
 So justly founded, lov'd, and absolute ?
 Explode my children, ribaldry and rhyme,
 Rever'd from Chaucer's down to Dryden's time ?
 Distinguish 'twixt false humour and the true,
 And wit make lovely to the vulgar view ?
 No—better things my destiny ordains,
 For Oxford has the wand, and Anna reigns."
 She ended, and assum'd Duke Disney's¹ grin,
 With broad plump face, pert eyes, and ruddy skin,
 Which show'd the stupid joke which lurk'd within.

In this lov'd form she knock'd at St. John's² gate,
 Where crowds already for his levee wait ;
 And wait they may, those wretches that appear
 To talk of service past and long arrear :
 But the proud partner of his pleasure goes
 Through crowds of envious eyes and servile bows.
 And now approaching where the statesman lay,
 To his unwilling eyes reveal'd the day.
 Starting, he wak'd, and, waking swore by God,
 " This early visit, friend, is wondrous odd !
 Scarce have I rested two small hours in bed,
 And fumes of wine oppress my aching head.

¹ Colonel Henry Disney, a friend of Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, among whom " Duke Disney" appears to have been a friendly nickname.—T.

² Lord Bolingbroke.—D.

By thee I'm sure my soul is understood
 Too well to plague me for the public good.
 Let stupid patriots toil to serve the brutes,
 And waste the fleeting hours in vain disputes ;
 The use of power supreme I better know,
 Nor will I lose the joys the gods bestow ;
 The sparkling glass, soft flute, and willing fair
 Alternate guard me from the shocks of care.
 'Tis the prerogative of wit like mine
 To emulate in ease the pow'r's divine ;
 And while I revel, leave the busy fools
 To plot like chemists, or to trudge like tools."

"Believe me, lord ! (replies his seeming friend)
 Some difficulties every state attend.
 Cares must surround the men that wealth possess,
 And sorrow mingles ev'n with love's success.
 Great as you are, no greatness long is sure,
 Advancement is but pain if not secure.
 All your long schemes may vanish in an hour,
 Oh tremble at the sad reverse of pow'r !
 How will these slaves that waiting watch your eye
 Insulting smile or pass regardless by !
 Nor is this thought the creature of my fears,
 Approaching ruin now most strong appears.
 Men must be dull who passively obey,
 And ignorance fixes arbitrary sway ;
 Think of this maxim, and no more permit
 A dangerous writer to retail his wit.¹
 The consequence of sense is liberty,
 And if men think aright, they will be free ;
 Encourage you the poet² I shall bring,
 Your Granville, he already tries to sing ;
 Nor think, my lord, I only recommend
 An able author, but a useful friend ;
 In verse his phlegm, in puns he shows his fire,
 And skill'd in pimping to your heart's desire."

¹ The Spectator was in course of publication at that time. This is an allusion to it.—W.

² Pope.—D.

" I thank thee, duke (replies the drowsy peer),
 But cannot listen to thy childish fear.
 This Addison, 'tis true, debauch'd in schools,
 Will sometimes oddly talk of musty rules.
 Yet here and there I see a master line,
 I feel and I confess the power divine.
 In spite of interest charm'd into applause,
 I wish for such a champion in our cause :
 Nor shall your reasons force me to submit
 To patronise a bard of meaner wit ;
 Men can but say wit did my judgment blind,
 And wit's the noblest frailty of the mind."

The disappointed goddess, swell'd with spite,
 Dropping her borrow'd form, appears in open light.
 So the sly nymph in masquerade disguise,
 The faith of her suspected lover tries ;
 But when the perjury too plain appears,
 Her eyes are fill'd with mingled rage and tears ;
 No more remembers the affected tone,
 Sinks the feign'd voice, and thunders in her own.

" How hast thou dar'd my party then to quit,
 Or dost thou, wretch, presume thou art a wit ?
 Read thy own works, consider well each line,
 In each dull page, how palpably I shine !
 'Tis I that to thy eloquence affords
 Such empty thoughts wrapt in superfluous words ;
 To me alone your pamphlet-praise you owe,
 'Tis I your tropes and florid sense bestow ;
 After such wreaths bestow'd, such service done,
 Dare you refuse protection to my son ?
 The time shall come, though now at court ador'd,
 When still a writer, though no more a lord,
 On common stalls thy darling works be spread,
 And thou shalt answer them to make them read."

She said, and turning show'd her wrinkled neck,
 In scales and colour like a roach's back.

THE COURT OF DULNESS.

A FRAGMENT.

*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*

HER palace plac'd beneath a muddy road,
 And such the influence of the dull abode,
 The carrier's horse above can scarcely drag his load.
 Here chose the goddess her belov'd retreat,¹
 Which Phœbus tries in vain to penetrate ;
 Adorn'd within with shells of small expense,
 (Emblems of tinsel rhyme and trifling sense),
 Perpetual fogs enclose the sacred cave,
 The neighbouring sinks their fragrant odours gave ;
 In contemplation here she pass'd her hours,
 Closely attended by subservient powers :
 Bold Profanation with a brazen brow,—
 Much to this great ally does Dulness owe :
 But still more near the goddess you attend,
 Naked Obscenity ! her darling friend.
 To thee for shelter all the dull still fly,
 Pert double meanings e'en at school we try.
 What numerous writers owe their praise to thee,
 No sex—no age—is from thy influence free ;
 By thee how bright appears the senseless song,
 By thee the book is sold, the lines are strong.
 The heaviest poet, by thy powerful aid,
 Warms the brisk youth and charms the sprightly maid ;
 Where breathes the mortal who's not prov'd thy force
 In well-bred pun, or waiting-room discourse ?

Such were the chiefs who form'd her gloomy court,
 Her pride, her ornament, and her support :
 Behind attended such a numerous crowd
 Of quibbles strain'd, old rhymes, and laughter loud,
 Throngs that might even make a goddess proud.
 Yet pensive thoughts lay brooding in her breast,
 And fear, the mate of power, her mind oppress'd.
 Oft she revolv'd—for oh, too well she knew
 What Merlin sung, and part long since prov'd true,

¹ Alluding to Pope's grotto at Twickenham.—D.

" When Harry's brows the diadem adorn,
 From Reformation Learning shall be born ;
 Slowly in strength the infant shall improve,
 The parent's glory and it's country's love :
 Free from the thralldom of monastic rhymes,
 In bright progression bless succeeding times ;
 Milton free poesy from the monkish chain,
 And Addison that Milton shall explain ;
 Point out the beauties of each living page ;
 Reform the taste of a degen'rate age ;
 Show that true wit disdains all little art,
 And can at once engage and mend the heart ;
 Knows even popular applause to gain,
 Yet not malicious, wanton, or profane."

This prophecy perplex'd her anxious head ;
 And, yawning thrice, thus to her sons she said :
 " When such an author honour'd shall appear,
 'Tis plain, the hour of our destruction's near !
 And public rumour now aloud proclaims
 At universal monarchy he aims.

What to this hero, whom shall we oppose ?
 A strong confederacy of stupid foes—
 Such brave allies as are by nature fit
 To check the progress of o'erflowing wit ;
 Where envy and where impudence are join'd
 To contradict the voice of humankind,
 At Dacier's ignorance shall gravely smile,
 And blame the coarseness of Spectator's style ;
 Shall swear that Tickell understands not Greek,
 That Addison can't write, nor Walpole speak."

Fir'd by this project Profanation rose—
 " One leader, Goddess, let me here propose ;
 In a near realm, which owns thy gentle sway,
 My darling son now chants his pleasing lay,
 Trampling on order, decency, and laws,
 And vaunts himself the champion of my cause.
 Him will I bring to teach the callow youth
 To scorn dry morals—laugh at sacred truth.
 All fears of future reckonings he shall quench,
 And bid them bravely drink and freely wench.

By his example much, by precept more,
There learn 'tis wit to swear, and safe to wh—re.

* * * * *

Mocks Newton's schemes, and Tillotson's discourse,
And imitates the virtues of a horse.

With this design to add to his renown,
He wears the rev'rend dress of band and gown."¹

The Goddess, pleas'd, bestow'd a gracious grin,
When thus does fair Obscenity begin :

"My humbler subjects are not plac'd so high,
They joke in kitchens, and in cellars ply ;
Yet one I have, bred in those worthy schools,
Admir'd by shoals of male and female fools ;
In ballads what I dictate he shall sing,
And troops of converts to my banners bring.
Bold in my cause, and most profanely dull,
With smooth unmeaning rhymes the town shall lull ;

Shall sing of worms in great Arbuthnot's strain,²

In lewd burlesque the sacred Psalms profane ;

To maids of honour songs obscene address,³

Nor need we doubt his wonderful success.

Long have I watch'd this genius yet unknown,
Inspir'd his rhyme, and mark'd him for my own ;

His early youth in superstition bred,

And monkish legends all the books he read.

Tinctur'd by these, proceeds his love of rhyme, ,

Milton he scorns, but Crambo thinks divine.

And oh ! 'tis sure (our foes confess this truth)

The old Cambronians yield to this stupendous youth.

But present want obscures the poet's name,

Be it my charge to talk him into fame.

My Lansdowne (whose love-songs so smoothly run,

My darling author, and my fav'rite son)

He shall protect the man whom I inspire,⁴

And Windsor Forest openly admire ;

¹ This character is drawn for Dr. Swift.—D.

² See verses to Mr. John Moore, author of the celebrated worm powder, generally printed among Pope's works.—T.

³ This alludes to a burlesque of the first Psalm, and The Challenge, a Court Ballad, attributed by Curll and others to Pope.—T.

⁴ Mr. Pope.—D.

And Bolingbroke with flattery shall bribe,
 'Till the charm'd lord most nobly shall subscribe ;
 And hostile Addison too late shall find,
 'Tis easier to corrupt than mend mankind.
 The town, which now revolts, once more obey,
 And the whole island own my pristine sway !”
 She said, and slowly leaves the realm of night,
 While the curs'd phantoms praise her droning flight.

AN EPISTLE FROM POPE TO LORD BOLINGBROKE.

CONFESS, dear Lælius !¹ pious, just, and wise,
 Some self-content does in that bosom rise,
 When you reflect, as sure you sometimes must,
 What talents Heaven does to thy virtue trust,
 While with contempt you view poor humankind,
 Weak, wilful, sensual, passionate, and blind.
 Amid these errors thou art faultless found,
 (The moon takes lustre from the darkness round)
 Permit me too, a small attendant star,
 To twinkle, though in a more distant sphere ;
 Small things with great, we poets oft compare.
 With admiration all your steps I view,
 And almost envy what I can't pursue.
 The world must grant (and 'tis no common fame)
 My courage and my probity the same.
 But you, great Lord, to nobler scenes were born ;
 Your early youth did Anna's court adorn.
 Let Oxford own, let Catalonia tell,
 What various victims to your wisdom fell ;
 Let vows or benefits the vulgar bind,
 Such ties can never chain th' intrepid mind.
 Recorded be that memorable hour,
 When, to elude exasperated pow'r,
 With blushless front you durst your friend betray,
 Advise the whole confed'racy to stay,
 While with sly courage you run brisk away.
 By a deserted court with joy receiv'd,
 Your projects all admir'd, your oaths believ'd ;

¹ Pope first addressed his *Essay on Man* to Lord Bolingbroke as Lælius.—D.

Some trust obtain'd, of which good use he made,
 To gain a pardon where you first betray'd.
 But what is pardon to th' aspiring breast?
 You should have been first minister at least :
 Failing of that, forsaken and depress'd,
 Sure any soul but yours had sought for rest !
 And mourn'd in shades, far from the public eye,
 Successless fraud, and useless infamy.
 And here, my lord ! let all mankind admire
 The efforts bold of unexhausted fire ;
 You stand the champion of the people's cause,
 And bid the mob reform defective laws.
 Oh ! was your pow'r, like your intention good,
 Your native land would stream with civic blood.
 I own these glorious schemes I view with pain ;
 My little mischiefs to myself seem mean,
 Such ills are humble though my heart is great,
 All I can do is flatter, lie, and cheat ;
 Yet I may say 'tis plain that you preside
 O'er all my morals, and 'tis much my pride
 To tread with steps unequal where you guide.
 My first subscribers¹ I have first defam'd,
 And when detected, never was asham'd ;
 Rais'd all the storms I could in private life,
 Whisper'd the husband to reform the wife ;
 Outwitted Lintot in his very trade,²
 And charity with obloquy repaid.
 Yet while you preach in prose, I scold in rhymes,
 Against th' injustice of flagitious times.
 You, learned doctor of the public stage,
 Give gilded poison to corrupt the age ;
 Your poor toad-eater I, around me scatter
 My scurril jests, and gaping crowds bespatter.
 This may seem envy to the formal fools
 Who talk of virtue's bounds and honour's rules ;
 We, who with piercing eyes look nature through,
 We know that all is right in all we do.

¹ To the translation of Homer.—D.

² Lintot accused Pope of having behaved unfairly in their negotiations concerning the publication of the *Odyssey*, and apparently with some show of reason, as appears in his unpublished correspondence with Broome and Fenton.—T.

Reason's erroneous—honest instinct right—
 Monkeys were made to grin, and fleas to bite.
 Using the spite by the Creator given,
 We only tread the path that's mark'd by Heaven.
 And sure with justice 'tis that we exclaim,
 Such wrongs must e'en your modesty inflame;
 While blockheads, court-rewards and honours share,
 You, poet, patriot, and philosopher,
 No bills in pocket, nor no garter wear.

When I see smoking on a booby's board
 Fat ortolans and pye of Perigord,
 Myself am mov'd to high poetic rage
 (The Homer and the Horace of the age),
 Puppies who have the insolence to dine
 With smiling beauties, and with sparkling wine;
 While I retire, plagu'd with an empty purse,
 Eat brocoli, and kiss my ancient nurse.¹
 But had we flourish'd when stern Harry reign'd,
 Our good designs had been but ill explain'd;
 The axe had cut your solid reas'nings short,
 I, in the porter's lodge, been scourg'd at court.
 To better times kind Heav'n reserv'd our birth.
 Happy for you such coxcombs are on earth!
 Mean spirits seek their villainy to hide;²
 We show our venom'd souls with nobler pride,
 And in bold strokes have all mankind defy'd,
 Pass'd o'er the bounds that keep mankind in awe,
 And laugh'd at justice, liberty, and law.
 While our admirers stare with dumb surprise,
 Treason and scandal we monopolise.
 Yet this remains our more peculiar boast,
 You 'scape the block, and I the whipping-post.

¹ To whom Pope erected a tomb, which he inscribed to her memory, in the churchyard at Twickenham.—D. Her name was Mary Beach. She died Nov. 5, 1725.—T.

² The whole of this passage alludes to the Second Satire of the Second Book of Horace, in which Pope attacked Mr. Wortley Montagu and Lady Mary under the name of Avidien and his wife.—T.

LADY HERTFORD,

TO LORD WILLIAM HAMILTON.¹

DEAR Colin, prevent my warm blushes,
 Since how can I speak without pain?
 My eyes oft have told you my wishes,
 Why don't you their meaning explain?

My passion will lose by expression,
 And you may too cruelly blame;
 Then do not expect a confession
 Of what is too tender to name.

Since yours is the province of speaking,
 How can you then hope it from me?
 Our wishes should be in our keeping,
 'Till yours tell us what they should be.

Alas! then, why don't you discover?
 Did your heart feel such torments as mine,
 Eyes need not tell over and over,
 What I in my breast would confine.

ANSWERED, FOR LORD WILLIAM HAMILTON,

BY LADY M. W. MONTAGU.

GOOD Madam, when ladies are willing,
 A man must needs look like a fool;
 For me, I would not give a shilling
 For one who would love out of rule.

You should leave us to guess by your blushing,
 And not speak the matter so plain;
 'Tis ours to write and be pushing,
 'Tis yours to affect a disdain.

That you're in a terrible taking,
 By all these sweet oglings I see;
 But the fruit that can fall without shaking,
 Indeed is too mellow for me.

¹ See letter to the Countess of Bute, *antè*, p. 345.—T.

EPISTLE FROM ARTHUR GREY, THE FOOTMAN,

TO MRS. MURRAY,

After his condemnation for attempting to commit violence.¹

READ, lovely nymph, and tremble not to read,
I have no more to wish, nor you to dread ;
I ask not life, for life to me were vain,
And death a refuge from severer pain.
My only hope in these last lines I try—
I would be pitied, and I then would die.
Long had I lived as sordid as my fate,
Nor curs'd the destiny that made me wait
A servile slave : content with homely food,
The gross instinct of happiness pursued :
Youth gave me sleep at night and warmth of blood.
Ambition yet had never touch'd my breast ;
My lordly master knew no sounder rest ;
With labour healthy, in obedience blest.
But when I saw—oh ! had I never seen
That wounding softness, that engaging mien !
The mist of wretched education flies,
Shame, fear, desire, despair, and love arise,
The new creation of those beauteous eyes.
But yet that love pursu'd no guilty aim ;
Deep in my heart I hid the secret flame :
I never hop'd my fond desire to tell,
And all my wishes were to serve you well.
Heav'ns ! how I flew, when winged by your command,
And kiss'd the letters giv'n me by your hand.
How pleas'd, how proud, how fond was I to wait,
Present the sparkling wine, or change the plate !
How, when you sung, my soul devour'd the sound,
And ev'ry sense was in the rapture drown'd !
Though bid to go, I quite forgot to move ;
—You knew not that stupidity was love !
But oh ! the torment not to be express'd,
The grief, the rage, the hell, that fir'd this breast,
When my great rivals, in embroid'ry gay,
Sate by your side, or led you from the play !

¹ See note, vol. i. p. 460.—T.

I still contriv'd near as I could to stand
(The flambeau trembling in my shaking hand);
I saw, or thought I saw, those fingers press'd,
For thus their passion by my own I guess'd,
And jealous fury all my soul possess'd.
Like torrents, love and indignation meet,
And madness would have thrown me at your feet.
Turn, lovely nymph (for so I would have said),
Turn from those triflers who make love a trade;
This is true passion in my eyes you see;
They cannot, no—they cannot love like me;
Frequent debauch has pall'd their sickly taste,
Faint their desire, and in a moment past;
They sigh not from the heart, but from the brain;
Vapours of vanity and strong champagne.
Too dull to feel what forms like yours inspire,
After long talking of their painted fire,
To some lewd brothel they at night retire;
There, pleas'd with fancy'd quality and charms,
Enjoy your beauties in a strumpet's arms.
Such are the joys those toasters have in view,
And such the wit and pleasure they pursue;
—And is this love that ought to merit you?
Each opera night a new address begun,
They swear to thousands what they swear to one.
Not thus I sigh—but all my sighs are vain—
Die, wretched Arthur, and conceal thy pain:
'Tis impudence to wish, and madness to complain.
Fix'd on this view, my only hope of ease,
I waited not the aid of slow disease;
The keenest instruments of death I sought,
And death alone employ'd my lab'ring thought.
This all the night—when I remember well
The charming tinkle of your morning bell!
Fir'd by the sound, I hasten'd with your tea,
With one last look to smoothe the darksome way—
But oh! how dear that fatal look has cost!
In that fond moment my resolves were lost.
Hence all my guilt, and all your sorrows rise—
I saw the languid softness of your eyes;

I saw the dear disorder of your bed ;
 Your cheeks all glowing with a tempting red ;
 Your night-clothes tumbled with resistless grace,
 Your flowing hair play'd careless down your face
 Your night-gown fasten'd with a single pin ;
 —Fancy improv'd the wondrous charms within !
 I fix'd my eyes upon that heaving breast,
 And hardly, hardly, I forbore the rest :
 Eager to gaze, unsatisfied with sight,
 My head grew giddy with the near delight !
 —Too well you know the fatal following night !
 Th' extremest proof of my desire I give,
 And since you will not love, I will not live.
 Condemn'd by you, I wait the righteous doom.
 Careless and fearless of the woes to come.
 But when you see me waver in the wind,
 My guilty flame extinct, my soul resign'd,
 Sure you may pity what you can't approve,
 The cruel consequence of furious love.
 Think the bold wretch, that could so greatly dare,
 Was tender, faithful, ardent, and sincere ;
 Think when I held the pistol to your breast,—
 Had I been of the world's large rule possess'd,—
 That world had then been yours, and I been blest ;
 Think that my life was quite below my care,
 Nor fear'd I any hell beyond despair.—

If these reflections, though they seize you late,
 Give some compassion for your Arthur's fate :
 Enough you give, nor ought I to complain :
 You pay my pangs, nor have I died in vain.

THE FOURTH ODE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE IMITATED.

“ Solvitur acris hyems gratâ vice veris,” &c.

SHARP winter now dissolv'd, the linnets sing,
 The grateful breath of pleasing Zephyrs bring
 The welcome joys of long-desired spring.

The galleys now for open sea prepare,
 The herds forsake their stalls for balmy air,
 The fields adorn'd with green th' approaching sun declare.

In shining nights the charming Venus leads
Her troop of Graces, and her lovely maids,
Who gaily trip the ground in myrtle shades.

The blazing forge her husband Vulcan heats
And thunderlike the labouring hammer beats,
While toiling Cyclops every stroke repeats.

Of myrtle new the cheerful wreath compose,
Of various flowers which opening spring bestows,
Till coming June presents the blushing rose.

Pay your vow'd offering to God Faunus' bower !
Then, happy Sestius, seize the present hour,
'Tis all that nature leaves to mortal power.

The equal hand of strong impartial Fate
Levels the peasant and th' imperious great,
Nor will that doom on human projects wait.

To the dark mansions of the senseless dead,
With daily steps our destin'd path we tread,
Realms still unknown, of which so much is said.

Ended your schemes of pleasure and of pride,
In joyous feasts no one will there preside,
Torn from your Lycidas' beloved side.

Whose tender youth does now our eyes engage,
And soon will give, in his maturer age,
Sighs to our virgins—to our matrons rage.

THE FIFTH ODE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE IMITATED.

" Quis multâ gracilis te puer in rosâ."

For whom are now your airs put on,
And what new beauty's doom'd to be undone ?

That careless elegance of dress,
This essence that perfumes the wind,

Your ev'ry motion does confess
Some secret conquest is design'd.

Alas! the poor unhappy maid,
To what a train of ills betray'd !

What fears, what pangs shall rend her breast,
How will her eyes dissolve in tears !

That now with glowing joy is bless'd,
Charm'd with the faithless vows she hears.

So the young sailor on the summer sea
 Gaily pursues his destin'd way :
 Fearless and careless on the deck he stands,
 Till sudden storms arise and thunders roll ;
 In vain he casts his eyes to distant lands,
 Distracting terror tears his timorous soul.

For me, secure I view the raging main,
 Past are my dangers, and forgot my pain :
 My votive tablet in the temple shows
 The monument of folly past ;
 I paid the bounteous god my grateful vows,
 Who snatch'd from ruin, sav'd me at the last.

THE LOVER: A BALLAD.

TO MR. CONGREVE.¹

At length, by so much importunity press'd,
 Take, Congreve, at once the inside of my breast.
 This stupid indiff'rence so often you blame,
 Is not owing to nature, to fear, or to shame :
 I am not as cold as a virgin in lead,
 Nor are Sunday's sermons so strong in my head :
 I know but too well how time flies along,
 That we live but few years, and yet fewer are young.

But I hate to be cheated, and never will buy
 Long years of repentance for moments of joy.
 Oh ! was there a man (but where shall I find
 Good sense and good-nature so equally join'd ?)
 Would value his pleasure, contribute to mine ;
 Not meanly would boast, nor lewdly design ;
 Not over severe, yet not stupidly vain,
 For I would have the power, though not give the pain.

No pedant, yet learned ; no rake-helly gay,
 Or laughing, because he has nothing to say ;
 To all my whole sex obliging and free,
 Yet never be fond of any but me ;

¹ I have found this poem in a commonplace-book of Lady Mary's, headed in her handwriting, "To Molly." It was, I suspect, really addressed to Lord Hervey.
 —T.

In public preserve the decorum that's just,
 And show in his eyes he is true to his trust !
 Then rarely approach, and respectfully bow,
 But not fulsomely pert, nor yet foppishly low.

But when the long hours of public are past,
 And we meet with champagne and a chicken at last,
 May every fond pleasure that moment endear ;
 Be banish'd afar both discretion and fear !
 Forgetting or scorning the airs of the crowd,
 He may cease to be formal, and I to be proud,
 Till lost in the joy, we confess that we live,
 And he may be rude, and yet I may forgive.

And that my delight may be solidly fix'd,
 Let the friend and the lover be handsomely mix'd ;
 In whose tender bosom my soul may confide,
 Whose kindness can soothe me, whose counsel can guide.
 From such a dear lover as here I describe,
 No danger should fright me, no millions should bribe ;
 But still this astonishing creature I know,
 As I long have liv'd chaste, I will keep myself so.

I never will share with the wanton coquette,
 Or be caught by a vain affectation of wit.
 The toasters and songsters may try all their art,
 But never shall enter the pass of my heart.
 I loathe the lewd rake, the dress'd fopling despise :
 Before such pursuers the nice virgin flies ;
 And as Ovid has sweetly in parable told,
 We harden like trees, and like rivers grow cold.

ON SEEING

A PORTRAIT OF SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

SUCH were the lively eyes and rosy hue
 Of Robin's face, when Robin first I knew ;
 The gay companion and the favourite guest ;
 Lov'd without awe, and without views caress'd ;
 His cheerful smile, and open honest look,
 Added new graces to the truth he spoke.

Then every man found something to commend,
 The pleasant neighbour and the worthy friend;
 The generous master of a private house,
 The tender father and indulgent spouse.

The hardest censors at the worst believ'd,
 His temper was too easily deceiv'd
 (A consequential ill good-nature draws,
 A bad effect, but from a noble cause).
 Whence, then, these clamours of a judging crowd?
 Suspicious, griping, insolent, and proud—
 Rapacious, cruel, violent, unjust;
 False to his friend, and traitor to his trust?

AN ELEGY ON MRS. THOMPSON.¹

UNHAPPY fair, by fatal love betray'd!
 Must then thy beauties thus untimely fade!
 And all thy blooming, soft, inspiring charms,
 Become a prey to Death's destructive arms!
 Though short thy day, and transient like the wind,
 How far more blest than those yet left behind!
 Safe in the grave thy griefs with thee remain;
 And life's tempestuous billows break in vain.
 Ye tender nymphs in lawless pastimes gay,
 Who heedless down the paths of pleasure stray;
 Though long secure, with blissful joy elate,
 Yet pause, and think of Arabella's fate;
 For such may be your unexpected doom,
 And your next pleasures lull you in the tomb.
 But let it be the muse's gentle care
 To shield from envy's rage the mould'ring fair;
 To draw a veil o'er faults she can't defend;
 And what prudes have devour'd, leave time to end:
 Be it her part to drop a pitying tear,
 And mourning sigh around thy sable bier,

¹ Arabella, the wife of Edward Thompson, Esq., one of the daughters and co-heirs of Edmund Dunch, Esq. The others were the Duchess of Manchester and Lady Oxenden.—D. Mrs. Thompson's story is told by Lord Hervey in his *Memoirs of the Reign of George II.* (ii. 346). According to this, she was separated from her husband in consequence of an intrigue with the notorious Sir George Oxenden, and died in childbed.—T.

Nor shall thy woes long glad th' ill-natur'd crowd,
 Silent to praise, and in detraction loud:
 When scandal, that through life each worth destroys,
 And malice that embitters all our joys,
 Shall in some ill-starr'd wretch find later stains,
 And let thine rest, forgot as thy remains.

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. BOWES.¹

Written extempore on a card, in a large company, December 14, 1724.

HAIL, happy bride, for thou art truly blest!
 Three months of rapture, crown'd with endless rest.
 Merit like yours was Heav'n's peculiar care,
 You lov'd—yet tasted happiness sincere.
 To you the sweets of love were only shown,
 The sure succeeding bitter dregs unknown;
 You had not yet the fatal change deplor'd,
 The tender lover for th' imperious lord:
 Nor felt the pain that jealous fondness brings:
 Nor felt, that coldness from possession springs.
 Above your sex, distinguish'd in your fate,
 You trusted—yet experienc'd no deceit;
 Soft were your hours, and wing'd with pleasure flew;
 No vain repentance gave a sigh to you:
 And if superior bliss Heaven can bestow,
 With fellow-angels you enjoy it now.

A MAN IN LOVE.

“L'Homme qui ne se trouve point, et ne se trouvera jamais.”

THE man who feels the dear disease,
 Forgets himself, neglects to please,
 The crowd avoids, and seeks the groves,
 And much he thinks when much he loves;
 Press'd with alternate hope and fear,
 Sighs in her absence, sighs when near.
 The gay, the fond, the fair, the young,
 Those trifles pass unseen along,

¹ Eleanor, the daughter of the Honourable Thomas Verney, eldest son of Thomas Lord Willoughby de Broke, married George Bowes, Esq., of Streatlam, in the county of Durham, October 1, 1724, and died December 4, in the same year.—W.

To him a pert insipid throng.
 But most he shuns the vain coquette ;
 Contemns her false affected wit :
 The minstrel's sound, the flowing bowl,
 Oppress and hurt the amorous soul.
 'Tis solitude alone can please,
 And give some intervals of ease.
 He feeds the soft distemper there,
 And fondly courts the distant fair ;
 To balls the silent shade prefers,
 And hates all other charms but hers.
 When thus your absent swain can do,
 Molly, you may believe him true.

A BALLAD.

To the tune of "The Irish Howl."

To that dear nymph, whose pow'rful name
 Does every throbbing nerve inflame
 (As the soft sound I low repeat,
 My pulse unequal measures beat),
 Whose eyes I never more shall see,
 That once so sweetly shin'd on thee ;
 Go, gentle wind ! and kindly bear
 My tender wishes to the fair.

Hoh, ho, ho, &c.

Amidst her pleasures let her know
 The secret anguish of my woe,
 The midnight pang, the jealous hell,
 Does in this tortur'd bosom dwell :
 While laughing she, and full of play,
 Is with her young companions gay ;
 Or hearing in some fragrant bower
 Her lover's sigh, and beauty's power.

Hoh, ho, ho, &c.

Lost and forgotten may I be !
 Oh may no pitying thought of me
 Disturb the joy that she may find,
 When love is crown'd and fortune kind :
 May that bless'd swain (whom yet I hate)
 Be proud of his distinguish'd fate :

Each happy night be like the first;
And he be bless'd as I am curs'd.

Hoh, ho, ho, &c.

While in these pathless woods I stray,
And lose my solitary way;
Talk to the stars, to trees complain,
And tell the senseless words my pain:
But madness spares the sacred name,
Nor dares the hidden wound proclaim;
Which, secret rankling, sure and slow,
Shall close in endless peace my woe.

Hoh, ho, ho, &c.

When this fond heart shall ache no more,
And all the ills of life are o'er
(If gods by lovers' prayers are mov'd,
As ev'ry god in heaven has lov'd);
Instead of bright Elysian joys,
That unknown something in the skies,
In recompense of all my pain,
The only heaven I'd obtain,
May I, the guardian of her charms,
Preserve that paradise from harms.

Hoh, ho, ho, &c.

A HYMN TO THE MOON.

Written in July, in an arbour.

THOU silver deity of secret night,
Direct my footsteps through the woodland shade;
Thou conscious witness of unknown delight,
The Lover's guardian, and the Muse's aid!
By thy pale beams I solitary rove,
To thee my tender grief confide;
Serenely sweet you gild the silent grove,
My friend, my goddess, and my guide.
E'en thee, fair queen, from thy amazing height,
The charms of young Endymion drew;
Veil'd with the mantle of concealing night;
With all thy greatness and thy coldness too.¹

¹ This sonnet is preserved by Count Algarotti in the seventh volume of his works, and is there mentioned with great commendation.—D.

TRANSLATED BY HERSELF.

DELLA notte serena argentea Diva,
 Testimon' fido de' piaceri ignoti:
 Custode degli amanti e delle Muse
 Fautrice, reggi me ne' boschi oscuri.
 Da' tuoi pallidi rai scorto io camino
 Su la terra, ed a te svelo i più cupi
 Pensieri. Ah indora il tacitorno bosco,
 Dolcemente serena amica mia,
 E mia guida, e mia Dea. Bella reina,
 Te dalla tua prodigiosa altezza
 Il lusinghiero Endimione attrasse,
 Del velo ingombra della notte oscura,
 Della tua ampiezza in onta e del tuo gelo.

THE BRIDE IN THE COUNTRY.

A Parody on Rowe's Ballad, "Despairing beside a clear stream," &c.

By the side of a half-rotten wood
 Melantha sat silently down,
 Convince'd that her scheme was not good,
 And vex'd to be absent from Town.
 Whilst pitied by no living soul,
 To herself she was forc'd to reply,
 And the sparrow, as grave as an owl,
 Sat list'ning and pecking hard by.

"Alas! silly maid that I was!"
 Thus sadly complaining, she cried;
 "When first I forsook that dear place,
 'T had been better by far I had died!
 How gaily I pass'd the long days,
 In a round of continual delights;
 Park, visits, assemblies, and plays,
 And a dance to enliven the nights.

“ How simple was I to believe
Delusive poetical dreams !
Or the flattering landscapes they give
Of meadows and murmuring streams.
Bleak mountains, and cold starving rocks,
Are the wretched result of my pains ;
The swains greater brutes than their flocks,
The nymphs as polite as the swains.

“ What though I have got my dear Phil ;
I see him all night and all day ;
I find I must not have my will,
And I’ve cursedly sworn to obey !
Fond damsel, thy power is lost,
As now I experience too late !
Whatever a lover may boast,
A husband is what one may hate !

“ And thou, my old woman, so dear,
My all that is left of relief,
Whatever I suffer, forbear—
Forbear to dissuade me from grief :
’Tis in vain, as you say, to repine
At ills which cannot be redress’d ;
But, in sorrows so poignant as mine,
To be patient, alas ! is a jest.

“ If, further to soothe my distress,
Your tender compassion is led,
Come hither and help to undress,
And decently put me to bed.
The last humble solace I wait,
Would Heav’n but indulge me the boon,
May some dream, less unkind than my fate,
In a vision transport me to Town.

“ Clarissa, meantime, weds a beau,
Who decks her in golden array :
She’s the finest at ev’ry fine show,
And flaunts it at Park and at Play :

Whilst I am here left in the lurch,
 Forgot and secluded from view ;
 Unless when some bumpkin at church
 Stares wistfully over the pew."

The following is another version of the preceding poem, as it was set to music, and called

MELINDA'S COMPLAINT.¹

By the side of a glimmering fire,
 Melinda sat pensively down,
 Impatient of rural esquire,
 And vex'd to be absent from Town.
 The cricket, from under the grate,
 With a chirp to her sighs did reply ;
 And the kitten, as grave as a cat,
 Sat mournfully purring hard by.

"Alas! silly maid that I was!"
 Thus sadly complaining, she cried ;
 "When first I forsook that dear place,
 'T were better by far I had died!
 How gaily I passed the long day,
 In a round of continu'd delight ;
 Park, visits, assemblies, and play,
 And quadrille to enliven the night.

"How simple was I to believe
 Delusive poetical dreams!
 The flattering landskips they give
 Of groves, meads, and murmuring streams.
 Bleak mountains, and wild staring rocks,
 Are the wretched result of my pains ;
 The swains greater brutes than their flocks,
 And the nymphs as polite as the swains.

"What though I have skill to ensnare,
 Where Smarts in bright circles abound ;
 What though at St. James's at prayers,
 Beaux ogle devoutly around :

¹ This poem was forwarded to Lord Wharncliffe by Mr. Sharpe. It does not appear to have been written by Lady Mary.—T.

Fond virgin, thy power is lost
 On a race of rude Hottentot brutes ;
 What glory in being the toast
 Of noisy dull 'squires in boots ?

“ And thou, my companion, so dear,
 My all that is left of relief,
 Whatever I suffer, forbear—
 Forbear to dissuade me from grief :
 'Tis in vain then, you'll say to repine
 At ills which cannot be redress'd,
 But in sorrows so pungent as mine,
 To be patient, alas ! is a test.

“ If, further to soothe my distress,
 Thy tender compassion is led,
 Call Jenny to help me undress,
 And decently put me to bed.
 The last humble solace I wait,
 Would Heaven indulge me the boon,
 Some dream less unkind than my fate
 In a vision transport me to Town.

“ Clarissa, meantime, weds a beau,
 Who decks her in golden array ;
 The finest at every fine show,
 And flaunts it at Park and at Play ;
 Whilst here we are left in the lurch,
 Forgot and secluded from view,
 Unless when some bumpkin at church
 Stares wistfully over the pew.”

SONG.

WHY should you think I live unpleas'd,
 Because I am not pleased with you ?
 My mind is not so far diseas'd,
 To yield when powder'd fops pursue.
 My vanity can find no charm
 In common prostituted vows ;
 Nor can you raise a wish that's warm
 In one that your true value knows.

While cold and careless thus I shun
 The buzz and flutter that you make,
 Perhaps some giddy girl may run
 To catch the prize that I forsake.

So brightly shines the glittering glare,
 In unexperienc'd children's eyes,
 When they with little arts ensnare
 The gaudy painted butterflies.

While they with pride the conquest boast,
 And think the chase deserving care,
 Those scorn the useless toil they cost
 Who're us'd to more substantial fare.

SONG—RONDEAU.

FINISH these languors ! Oh ! I'm sick
 Of dying airs, I know the trick ;
 Long since I've learn'd to well explain
 Th' unmeaning cant of fire and pain,
 And see through all the senseless lies
 Of burning darts from killing eyes ;
 I'm tir'd with this continual rout
 Of bowing low and leading out.

Finish, &c.

Finish this tedious dangling trade,
 By which so many fools are made ;
 For fools they are, whom you can please
 By such affected airs as these :
 At opera near my box to stand,
 And slyly press the given hand,
 Thus may you wait whole years in vain ;
 But sure you would, were you in pain.

Finish, &c.

EPITHALAMIUM.

SINCE you, Mr. H * * d, will marry black Kate,
 Accept of good wishes for that blessed state :
 May you fight all the day like a dog and a cat,
 And yet ev'ry year produce a new brat.

Fal la !

May she never be honest—you never be sound ;
 May her tongue like a clapper be heard a mile round ;
 Till abandon'd by joy, and deserted by grace,
 You hang yourselves both in the very same place.
 Fal la !¹

THE NINTH ODE OF THE THIRD BOOK OF
 HORACE IMITATED.

1736.²

“ Donec gratus eram tibi.”

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

WHILST in each of my schemes you most heartily join'd,
 And help'd the worst jobs that I ever design'd,
 In pamphlets, in ballads, in senate, at table,
 Thy satire was witty, thy counsel was able.

WILLIAM PULTENEY.

Whilst with me you divided both profit and care,
 And the plunder and glory did equally share ;
 Assur'd of his place, if my fat friend should die,
 The Prince of Wales was not so happy as I.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

Harry Pelham is now my support and delight,
 Whom we bubble all day, and we joke on at night ;
 His head is well furnish'd, his lungs have their merit,
 I would venture a rope to advance such a spirit.

WILLIAM PULTENEY.

I too have a Harry more useful than yours,
 Writes verses like mad, and will talk you whole hours ;
 I would bleed by the hatchet, or swing by the cord,
 To see him once more in his robes, like a lord.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

But what if this quarrel was kindly made up,
 Would you, my dear Willy, accept of a sup ?
 If the queen should confess you had long been her choice,
 And you knew it was I who had spoke in her voice ?

¹ I have not been able to discover who are the parties here referred to.—T.

² “ Pulteney at this time interchanged some secret civilities with the court and with the Walpoles (Wal. Cor., May 25, 1736), which explains Lady M. W. Montagu's parody of Horace and Lydia into a dialogue between Walpole and Pulteney.”—*Note of Mr. Croker to Lord Hervey's Memoirs of the Reign of George II.*, ii. 86. Mr. Croker refers to Sir R. Walpole's correspondence in Coxe's *Memoirs*, 4to, 1798, iii. 321.—T.

WILLIAM PULTENEY.

Though my Harry's so gay, so polite, and so civil,
 You rude as a bear, and more proud than the devil,
 I gladly would drop him, and laugh in your ear
 At the fools we have made for this last dozen year.

A SUMMARY

OF LORD LYTTLETON'S ADVICE TO A LADY.

"The counsels of a friend, Belinda, hear," &c.

BE plain in dress, and sober in your diet;
 In short, my deary, kiss me! and be quiet.

SONG.¹

WHY will Delia thus retire,
 And languish life away?
 Why the sighing crows admire,
 'Tis too soon for hartshorn tea.
 All these dismal looks and fretting
 Cannot Damon's life restore;
 Long ago the worms have eat him,
 You can never see him more.
 Once again consult your toilet,
 In the glass your face review;
 So much weeping sure will spoil it,
 And no spring your charms renew.
 I, like you, was born a woman,
 Well I know what vapours mean!
 The disease, alas! is common,
 Single we have all the spleen.
 All the morals that they teach us
 Never cured our sorrows yet:
 Choose among the pretty fellows
 One of humour, youth, and wit.
 Prithee hear him ev'ry morning,
 At the least an hour or two;
 Once again at night returning,
 I believe the dose will do.

¹ To Lady Irwin, daughter of the Earl of Carlisle. An answer by Lady Irwin may be found in the so-called Additions to Pope's Works, 1776, vol. i. p. 170.—T.

THE SAME,

TRANSLATED BY LADY M. W. MONTAGU.

Recipe per l'Eccellentissima Signora Chiara Michelli.

Vi consigliate con lo specchio, e il vostro
 Viso mirate—lagrime cotante
 Lo guasteranno, ed i perduti vezzi
 Non avrauno altra primavera. Io nacqui,
 Donna, qual voi, e so qual voi la forza
 Che hanno i vapori e infirmità commune:
 Tutte abbiám mal di milza, e non sanaro
 Delle moral le massime più saggi
 Gli minimi neppur de' nostri guai.
 Il più amabile voi tra tanti amanti
 Sceglier vi piaccia, e sopra tutto quello
 Chi più degli altri ha gioventude e spirito;
 Io vi prego d'udirlo un ora al giorno,
 Ed un altra la sera, e questa dose
 Sia bastante rimedio al vostro male.

 THE POLITICIANS.

IN ancient days when every brute
 To humble privilege had right;
 Could reason, wrangle, or dispute,
 As well as scratch, and tear, and bite;
 When Phœbus shone his brightest ray,
 The rip'ning corn his pow'r confess'd;
 His cheering beams made Nature gay,
 The eagle in his warmth was blest.
 But malcontents e'en then arose,
 The birds who love the dolesome night
 The darkest grove with care they chose,
 And there caball'd against the light.
 The screech-owl, with ill-boding cry,
 Portends strange things, old women say,
 Stops every fool that passes by,
 And frights the schoolboy from his play.

The raven and the double bat,
 With families of owls combine ;
 In close consult they rail and chat,
 And curse aloud the glorious shine.
 While the great planet, all serene,
 Heedless pursues his destin'd way,
 He asks not what these murmurs mean,
 But runs his course, and gives us day.

BALLAD, ON A LATE OCCURRENCE.

AMONG LADY M. W. MONTAGU'S MSS.¹

UNGODLY papers ev'ry week
 Poor simple souls persuade
 That courtiers good for nothing are,
 Or but for mischief made.
 But I who know their worthy hearts,
 Pronounce that we are blind,
 Who disappoint their honest schemes,
 Who would be just and kind.
 For in this vile degen'rate age
 'Tis dang'rous to do good ;
 Which will, when I have told my tale,
 Be better understood.
 A puppy, gamesome, blithe, and young,
 Who play'd about the court,
 Was destin'd by unlucky boys,
 To be their noonday's sport.
 With flatt'ring words they him entic'd,
 (Words such as much prevail !)
 And then with cruel art they tied
 A bottle to his tail.
 Lord Hervey at a window stood,
 Detesting of the fact ;
 And cried aloud with all his might,
 " I know the bottle's crack'd.

¹ It is very improbable that Lady Mary wrote this poem. There are "among her MSS." a great many poems, both in her own and other persons' handwritings, which are certainly not by her.—T.

“ Do not to such a dirty hole
Let them your tail apply ;
Alas ! you cannot know these things
One half so well as I.

“ Harmless and young, you don’t suspect
The venom of this deed ;
But I see through the whole design,—
It is to make you bleed.”

This good advice was cast away ;
The puppy saw it shine ;
And tamely lick’d their treach’rous hands,
And thought himself grown fine.

But long he had not worn the gem,
But, as Lord Hervey said,
He ran and bled ; the more he ran,
Alas ! the more he bled.

Griev’d to the soul, this gallant lord
Tripp’d hastily down stairs ;
With courage and compassion fir’d,
To set him free prepares.

But such was his ingratitude
To this most noble lord,
He bit his lily hand quite through,
As he untied the cord.

Next day the Maids of Honour came,
As I heard people tell ;
They wash’d the wound with brinish tears,
—And yet it is not well.

Oh ! gen’rous youth, my counsel take,
And warlike acts forbear ;
Put on white gloves, and lead folks out,
—For that is your affair.¹

Never attempt to take away
Bottles from others’ tails,
For that is what no soul will bear
From Italy to Wales.

¹ Lord Hervey was at that time vice-chamberlain.—D.

SONG.

BLAME not that love, too cruel fair,
 Which your own charms did first create;
 Blame not my silence and despair,—
 Such crimes can ne'er deserve your hate:
 Why should your eyes first stir desire?
 Your matchless wit, why fan the fire?
 Repentance comes too late.

Vain are the vows that you complain
 Are to another fondly made;
 All your advice to me's as vain;
 You must not—cannot be obey'd;
 My heart can't change, though you command,
 Nor can my heart obey your hand!
 Love's power none can evade!

[Lord Wharncliffe here inserted some "Lines written under the Picture of Colonel Churchill," they having been found attributed to Lady Mary in a commonplace-book of Lady Mary Finch. This fact is, of course, no evidence of authorship. The lines were, in fact, written by David Mallet, and published among his poems.—T.]

VERSES, WRITTEN IN A GARDEN.

SEE how the pair of billing doves
 With open murmurs own their loves;
 And, heedless of censorious eyes,
 Pursue their unpolluted joys;
 No fears of future want molest
 The downy quiet of their nest:
 No int'rest join'd the happy pair,
 Securely blest in Nature's care,
 While her dictates they pursue;
 For constancy is Nature too.

Can all the doctrine of the schools,
 Our maxims, our religious rules,
 Can learning to our lives ensure,
 Virtue so bright, or bliss so pure?

The great Creator's happy ends
 Virtue and pleasure ever blends :
 In vain the Church and Court have tried
 Th' united essence to divide ;
 Alike they find their wild mistake,
 The pedant priest and giddy rake.

SONG.

FOND wishes you pursue in vain,
 My heart is vow'd away and gone ;
 Forbear thy sighs, too, lovely swain,
 Those dying airs that you put on !
 Go try on other maids your art,
 Ah ! leave this lost unworthy heart,
 But you must leave it soon.

Such sighs as these you should bestow
 On some unpractis'd blooming fair ;
 Where rosy youth doth warmly glow,
 Whose eyes forbid you to despair.
 Not all thy wond'rous charms can move
 A heart that must refuse your love,
 Or not deserve your care.

IMPROMPTU, TO A YOUNG LADY SINGING.

SING, gentle maid—reform my breast,
 And soften all my care ;
 Thus may I be some moments blest,
 And easy in despair.
 The pow'r of Orpheus lives in you ;
 You can the passions of my soul subdue,
 And tame the lions and the tigers there.

ADVICE.

CEASE, fond shepherd—cease desiring
 What you never must enjoy ;
 She derides your vain aspiring,
 She to all your sex is coy.

Cunning Damon once pursu'd her,
 Yet she never would incline ;
 Strephon too as vainly woo'd her,
 Though his flocks are more than thine.

At Diana's shrine aloud,
 By the zone around her waist,
 Thrice she bow'd, and thrice she vow'd
 Like the Goddess to be chaste.

ANSWER.

THOUGH I never got possession,
 'Tis a pleasure to adore ;
 Hope, the wretch's only blessing,
 May in time procure me more.

Constant courtship may obtain her,—
 Where both wealth and merit fail,
 And the lucky minute gain her,—
 Fate and fancy must prevail.

At Diana's shrine aloud,
 By the bow and by the quiver,
 Thrice she bow'd, and thrice she vow'd,
 Once to love—and that for ever.

EPISTLE TO LORD HERVEY ON THE KING'S
 BIRTHDAY.

FROM THE COUNTRY.

Where I enjoy in contemplative chamber,
 Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber.

THROUGH shining crowds you now make way,
 With sideling bow and golden key ;
 While wrapped in spleen and easy-chair,
 For all this pomp so small my care,
 I scarce remember who are there.
 Yet in brocade I can suppose
 The potent Knight¹ whose presence goes
 At least a yard before his nose :

¹ Sir Robert Walpole.—D.

And majesty with sweeping train,
 That does so many yards contain,
 Superior to her waiting nymphs,
 As lobster to attendant shrimps.
 I do not ask one word of news,
 Which country damsels much amuse.
 If a new batch of Lords appears,
 After a tour of half six years,
 With foreign years to grace the nation,
 The Maids of Honour's admiration;
 Whose bright improvements give surprise
 To their own lady-mother's eyes:
 Improvements, such as colts might show,
 Were mares so mad to let them go;
 Their limbs perhaps a little stronger,
 Their manes and tails grown somewhat longer.
 I would not hear of ball-room scuffles,
 Nor what new whims adorn the ruffles.
 This meek epistle comes to tell,
 On Monday, I in town shall dwell;
 Where, if you please to condescend
 In Cavendish-square¹ to see your friend,
 I shall disclose to you alone
 Such thoughts as ne'er were thought upon.

EPIGRAM, 1734.²

BORN to be slaves, our fathers freedom sought,
 And with their blood the precious treasure bought;
 We their mean offspring our own bondage plot,
 And, born to freedom, for our chains we vote.

AN ANSWER TO A LADY,

WHO ADVISED LADY M. W. MONTAGU TO RETIRE.

You little know the heart that you advise:
 I view this various scene with equal eyes;
 In crowded courts I find myself alone,
 And pay my worship to a nobler throne.

¹ Mr. Wortley Montagu's town-house was in Cavendish-square, where he resided, at least as early as August, 1732. Lady Mary's letters to him during her long residence in Italy are sometimes addressed to him there.—T.

² From a copy in Lady Mary's handwriting, with the initials "M. W. M."—T.

Long since the value of this world I know ;
 Pitied the folly, and despis'd the show ;
 Well as I can, my tedious part I bear,
 And wait dismissal without pain or fear.

Seldom I mark mankind's detested ways,
 Not hearing censure or affecting praise ;
 And unconcern'd my future fate I trust
 To that sole Being, merciful and just !

WRITTEN AT LOVERE, OCTOBER, 1736.¹

If age and sickness, poverty and pain,
 Should each assault me with alternate plagues,
 I know mankind is destin'd to complain,
 And I submit to torment and fatigues.

The pious farmer, who ne'er misses pray'rs,
 With patience suffers unexpected rain ;

He blesses Heav'n for what its bounty spares,
 And sees, resign'd, a crop of blighted grain.

But, spite of sermons, farmers would blaspheme,
 If a star fell to set their thatch on flame.

CONCLUSION OF A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

SENT FROM ITALY, 1741.

BUT happy you from the contagion free,
 Who, through her veil, can human nature see ;
 Calm you reflect, amid the frantic scene,
 On the low views of those mistaken men,
 Who lose the short invaluable hour,
 Through dirt-pursuing schemes of distant pow'r :
 Whose best enjoyments never pay the chase,
 But melt like snow within a warm embrace.
 Believe me, friend, for such indeed are you,
 Dear to my heart, and to my int'rest true ;
 Too much already have you thrown away,
 Too long sustain'd the labour of the day ;
 Enjoy the remnant of declining light,
 Nor wait for rest till overwhelm'd in night.
 By present pleasure balance pain you've past,
 Forget all systems, and indulge your taste.

¹ This date must be erroneous. Lady Mary was not at Lovere till 1747. See *antè*, p. 153.—T.

TO THE SAME.

WHEREVER Fortune points my destin'd way,
 If my capricious stars ordain my stay
 In gilded palace, or in rural scene,
 While breath shall animate this frail machine,
 My heart sincere, which never flatt'ry knew,
 Shall consecrate its warmest wish to you.
 A monarch compass'd by a suppliant crowd,
 Prompt to obey, and in his praises loud,
 Among those thousands who on smiles depend,
 Perhaps has no disinterested friend.

WRITTEN AT LOVERE, 1755.

WISDOM, slow product of laborious years,
 The only fruit that life's cold winter bears ;
 Thy sacred seeds in vain in youth we lay,
 By the fierce storm of passion torn away.
 Should some remain in a rich gen'rous soil,
 They long lie hid, and must be rais'd with toil ;
 Faintly they struggle with inclement skies,
 No sooner born than the poor planter dies.

LINES WRITTEN IN A BLANK PAGE OF MILTON'S
PARADISE LOST.¹

THIS happy pair a certain bliss might prove,
 Confined to constancy and mutual love :
 Heaven to one object limited their vows,
 The only safety faithless Nature knows.
 God saw the wand'ring appetite would range,
 And would have kept them from the power to change ;
 But falsehood, soon as man increased, began ;
 Down through the race the swift contagion ran,
 All ranks are tainted, all deceitful prove,
 False in all shapes, but doubly false in love.
 This makes the censure of the world more just,
 That damns with shame the weakness of a trust !

¹ It appears from the Strawberry Hill Catalogue, that "in the Glass Closet" was a copy of "Milton's Paradise Lost, given by the Duke of Wharton to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who has written verses in the first leaf."—T.

Ere change began, our sex no scandal knew,
 All nymphs were chaste as long as swains were true ;
 But now, tho' by the subtlest art betray'd,
 We're so by custom and false maxims sway'd
 That infamy still brands the injured maid.

ADDRESSED TO —, 1736.¹

WITH toilsome steps I pass thro' life's dull road
 (No pack-horse half so tired of his load) ;
 And when this dirty journey will conclude,
 To what new realms is then my way pursued ?
 Say, then does the unbodied spirit fly
 To happier climes and to a better sky ?
 Or, sinking, mixes with its kindred clay,
 And sleeps a whole eternity away ?
 Or shall this form be once again renewed,
 With all its frailties, all its hopes, endued ;
 Acting once more on this detested stage
 Passions of youth, infirmities of age ?

I see in Tully what the ancients thought,
 And read unprejudiced what moderns taught ;
 But no conviction from my reading springs—
 Most dubious on the most important things.
 Yet one short moment would at once explain
 What all philosophy has sought in vain ;
 Would clear all doubt, and terminate all pain.
 Why then not hasten that decisive hour ;
 Still in my view, and ever in my power ?
 Why should I drag along this life I hate,
 Without one thought to mitigate the weight ?
 Whence this mysterious bearing to exist,
 When every joy is lost, and every hope dismissed ?
 In chains and darkness wherefore should I stay,
 And mourn in prison whilst I keep the key ?

¹ Sent by the Countess of Pomfret to the Countess of Hertford, Nov. 2, N.S., 1740.—See *Hertford and Pomfret Correspondence*, ii. 53. Lady Pomfret says: "I shall conclude this letter with a philosophical reflection of Lady Mary's. She says that no one has had a copy of it but myself, so pray do not let us make it public." This poem is now for the first time added to Lady Mary's Works.—T.

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